

# THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

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EPISODES OF THE MONTH

THE EDITOR

GERMANY BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

ALAN BULLOCK

FINLAND AND RUSSIA

EDWARD CRANKSHAW

PEERS AND THE NEW DEMOCRACY

HON. JOHN GRIGG

UNWORTHY APOLOGIA

LORD GEDDES

THE DECLINE OF PERSONAL MONARCHY

A. L. ROWSE

AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS BY DENYS SMITH, C. L. SHAW,  
ERIC GILLET, SIR CHARLES PETRIE, Bt., JOHN BAYLEY,  
RUBY MILLAR, AND ALEC ROBERTSON

*PUBLISHED MONTHLY*

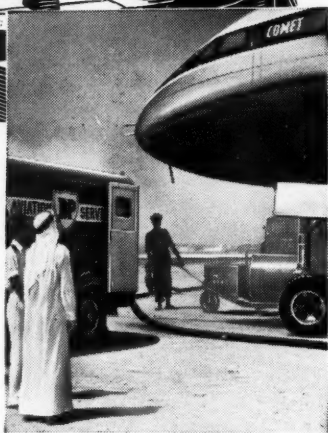
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# THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

CONTENTS

FEBRUARY 1953

Episodes of the Month. <i>The Editor</i> ... ..	71
Germany Before the Elections. <i>Alan Bullock</i> ... ..	83
Finland and Russia. <i>Edward Crankshaw</i> ... ..	87
Coming Changes in United States Policy. <i>Denys Smith</i> ... ..	91
Peers and the New Democracy. <i>Hon. John Grigg</i> ... ..	94
Four Centuries of the Alehouse. <i>C. L. Shaw</i> ... ..	100
Fifty Years Ago ... ..	103
Books New and Old:	
Simple Subtlety. <i>Eric Gillett</i> ... ..	105
Unworthy Apologia. <i>Lord Geddes</i> ... ..	109
The Decline of Personal Monarchy. <i>A. L. Rowse</i> ... ..	111
An Individualist Looks at his World. <i>Sir Charles Petrie</i> ... ..	112
Contented Poet. <i>John Bayley</i> ... ..	113
Novels. <i>Ruby Millar</i> ... ..	116
Books in Brief. <i>E. G. and J. M.</i> ... ..	120
Record Review. <i>Alec Robertson</i> ... ..	125

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## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS NUMBER

**ALAN BULLOCK:** Historian and broadcaster. During the War helped to organize B.B.C. foreign broadcasts to Europe ; for a time Diplomatic Correspondent of the B.B.C. European Service. Fellow and Tutor of New College, Oxford, 1945-52. Now Censor of St. Catherine's Society, Oxford. Author of *Hitler, A Study in Tyranny*.

**EDWARD CRANKSHAW:** Writer and journalist. Served on British Military Mission in Moscow during the last War. Author of *Russia and the Russians*, etc.

**DENYS SMITH:** Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* in Washington.

**HON. JOHN GRIGG:** Assistant Editor of *The National and English Review*.

**C. L. SHAW:** Joined the brewing industry in 1933. Army service 1939-45 (B.E.F. France, 1940). On staff of Copper Development Association 1946-48. Author of *Letizia Bonaparte*.

**ERIC GILLET:** Literary Editor of *The National and English Review*.

**LORD GEDDES, P.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B.:** Served South African War and First World War. Director of Recruiting, War Office, 1916-7. M.P., and prominent member of Coalition Government, 1917-20. British Ambassador to the U.S.A., 1920-4. Regional Commissioner for the South-East and North-West Regions, 1939-42.

**A. L. ROWSE:** Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. Lecturer of Merton College, 1927-31. London School of Economics, 1931-35. Author of *Tudor Cornwall, The Spirit of English History*, etc.

**SIR CHARLES PETRIE, BT.:** Editor *Household Brigade Magazine* since 1945. Author of *The Jacobite Movement, Bolingbroke, The Letters of Charles I, The Four Georges: A Revaluation*, etc.

**JOHN BAYLEY:** Lecturer in English Literature, New College, Oxford.

**RUBY MILLAR:** Journalist and publisher's editor for many years.

**ALEC ROBERTSON:** Writer, critic and broadcaster. Author of books on Dvorjak, Sacred Music, Plainchant, etc.



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# THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

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**A**S the New Year came in Mr. Churchill was crossing the Atlantic to renew his personal contact with Mr. Eisenhower, to say good-bye to Mr. Truman, and incidentally to have a short holiday in Jamaica. He took with him a message of goodwill from Mr. Tom O'Brien, Chairman of the T.U.C. and Socialist M.P. for North-West Nottingham. This message must not only have been an immense encouragement to the Prime Minister, but must also have given new heart to all those who feel that trade union leadership should be national, and not partisan.

## **Trade Unions Moving out of Politics ?**

**M**R. O'BRIEN'S generous and statesmanlike gesture was made on behalf of the trade union movement, though it has since been disowned or severely criticized by some prominent, and many not so prominent, trade unionists. We have never underrated the strength of sectional and even subversive feeling in various parts of the trade union world, and we have often stressed that the T.U.C., or at least its General Council, is not necessarily representative of the trade union movement as a whole. We cannot therefore regard Mr. O'Brien's message as decisive evidence that the trade unions are moving out of party politics, much as we should like to do so. But we can regard it as a very hopeful sign and, while noting the indignation with which it has been received in some quarters, we should also bear in mind the fact that it has been followed by a much more general silence—a silence which may perhaps, in this case, amount to tacit endorsement.

## **Rebuff to Socialist Planners**

**A**NOTHER interesting symptom was the T.U.C. General Council's refusal to take part in the detailed planning of future Socialist policy. The Labour Party Executive had invited the General Council to place its nominees on the working parties which will consider nationalizing several more of Britain's major industries. This invitation was politely

declined and the Labour Party had to content itself with the assurance that "appropriate committees" would be made available "for purposes of consultation."

It is clear that responsible trade union leaders are averse to any further large-scale nationalization and that they are no longer willing to be identified with the preparation of doctrinaire schemes. The old alliance between sub-Marxist intellectuals and the captains of organized labour is breaking down—and not before time. If the Labour Party is to retain the active support of those who made it—the trade unions—it will have to rid itself of those influences which have dominated it for so long, and which have given its policy an unrealistic, and at times an unpatriotic, twist. Socialism, as it has hitherto been understood, will have to go, or the Labour Party may find itself short of funds. To a certain type of politician this argument may be more convincing than that Socialism would threaten the country itself with immediate bankruptcy, though the latter is equally true.

### Miners and the Nation

THE present state of affairs in the coal-mining industry should be enough to make anyone doubt the value of nationalization. It was thought that this policy would infuse a new spirit into the miners and that, with the help of mechanization and better conditions, they would perform prodigies. But now, six years after the industry was nationalized, the Coal Board is making a serious loss and the country is not able to benefit from exporting on a large scale its most valuable raw material. The miners have received so many wage concessions that their level of earnings is now far higher than that of workers in any other major industry. Even so, they are demanding still higher wages and over a million and a quarter tons of coal were lost last year on account of disputes. It is not too much to say that the miners' attitude is an open challenge to the nation.

### Show-Down Delayed

IN our opinion this challenge should have been faced last year when the I.N.U.M., in spite of previous undertakings, demanded the exclusion of Italian workers from the pits. The case for retaining the services, and indeed for increasing the number, of these workers was ably and courageously stated in our February number by a Socialist ex-Minister, Mr. Alfred Robens. The Government could therefore presumably have counted upon Front Bench Opposition support if it had staged a show-down with the miners on that vital issue.

But the opportunity was missed and a policy of appeasement was tried—with the usual lamentable results. It is true that there has been a marked improvement in recruiting for the mines at home, but a larger



## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

labour force may be a liability if production is insufficient and its cost uneconomic. We can no longer afford to waste our "black gold" while a privileged body of workers, with the help of Communist agitators, holds the whole nation up to ransom. This problem must be tackled with firmness and inspiring leadership. The present technique has proved, as we foretold in June, a disastrous failure.

### Eisenhower's Inaugural

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER was sworn in as thirty-fourth President of the United States on January 20. In his inaugural speech he laid down a number of wise and noble principles, but unfortunately did so in the tabular form which seems to be the fashion with American Presidents. Clémenceau, who remarked of Wilson's Fourteen Points that "*le bon Dieu n'a que dix*," would at least have been glad to find that Eisenhower was content with nine! He would also have been grateful for the new President's reference to France's struggle in the Far East. "The faith we hold . . . confers a common dignity upon the French soldier who dies in Indo-China, the British soldier killed in Malaya, the American life given in Korea."

Few men have taken office amid such general approbation and goodwill as has Dwight D. Eisenhower. Not only by his own countrymen, but by free people throughout the world, he is looked to as a leader and a friend. On the day of his inauguration Mr. Stevenson, his late opponent, said: "My prayers are very much with Mr. Eisenhower." Countless others must have been praying likewise.

### New Government in France

THE most significant feature of the political crisis in France, as a result of which M. René Mayer succeeded M. Pinay as Prime Minister, was that the Gaullists emerged from their isolation and took part in the process of bargaining, though they are not represented in the new Cabinet. A section of the R.P.F. group in the Assembly had already, during the Pinay régime, defied General de Gaulle's instruction to remain completely aloof from party politics. But now the General himself has decided to change his tactics, and he obviously hopes to achieve some of his purposes within the context of an unreformed Constitution. The Mayer Government depends for its existence upon Gaullist support, so it will have to make concessions to the General in foreign affairs, if not in domestic policy. This means that the E.D.C. Treaty will be ratified, if at all, in a much amended form, and some people are already disposed to regard it as a dead letter. The departure of M. Schuman from the Quai d'Orsay after his exceptionally long tenure has made the fate of E.D.C. seem at the very least doubtful.

### Events in Germany

ON the German side its fate seems equally uncertain, and Mr. Alan Bullock describes in our first article this month the present uneasy predicament of Dr. Adenauer and the shakiness of democratic institutions in the Federal Republic. Since this article was written seven former Nazi leaders have been arrested in the British Zone on the instructions of the U.K. High Commissioner. Mr. Eden told the House of Commons that the Federal Chancellor was notified of these intended arrests before they were made, and he added in reply to a supplementary that it was "more than likely" our information about these ex-Nazis was "more far-reaching than that of the Bonn Government." If the would-be democratic authorities in Western Germany are so badly briefed on the sinister forces which are at work, it must surely be premature for the Occupying Powers to surrender all, or nearly all, their sanctions.

### Purges in Eastern Europe

EVEN fellow-travellers have been shocked by the purges which have recently been conducted in several satellite countries, and in Russia itself. Nor is this surprising, because those who are fellow-travellers under a free régime are the most likely victims under a Communist régime.

There has been much speculation about the ulterior meaning of these purges, and some wishful thinkers have rushed to the conclusion that the Communist bloc is on the point of breaking up. Others have even suggested that civil war may be imminent in Russia. We cannot share these pleasant hopes, because we are always reminded of the immense advantage which arbitrary and efficient central power has, in the modern world, over any possible conspirator. Some day the colossus which faces and threatens us may fall to pieces or, more likely, change its demeanour towards us. That is our supreme objective in the Cold War, but we should be wise to assume that its attainment is still a distant prospect.

### Neguib a Complete Dictator

IN Egypt General Neguib continues to be strong, minatory and inscrutable. His flirtation with that old harridan, the Wafd, has—as we predicted at the start—ended in disillusionment for himself and (we hope) in the extinction of the Wafd as a nucleus of revolutionary demagogy and corruption. But Neguib's own utterances about Anglo-Egyptian relations seriously deteriorated some time ago, and we can only hope that, now he is a complete dictator, he will have the courage of his earlier declarations. It is certainly unthinkable for us to evacuate the Canal Zone, thereby abandoning extremely valuable installations as

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

well as a vital strategic area, unless we can be quite sure that there would be something reliable to take our place.

### Intrigue in the Sudan

NEGUIB'S behaviour in regard to the Sudan is hardly consistent with a desire to be on good terms with us. By skilful intrigue he has elicited from all the *Northern* Sudanese political parties a joint demand that the British should leave within three years and that no special powers should be retained by the Governor-General. This is a palpable threat to the non-Moslem South—approximately three million African tribesmen for whose welfare we are responsible.

A correspondent has described to us the unworthy and unavailing efforts made by Neguib's emissary to seduce these Southern Sudanese from their faith in British protection. We must not desert them for the sake of a useful agreement with Egypt; if we did that we should literally be selling them down the river. "Here," writes our informant, "are Africans who have abiding trust in us, because, though we may not have achieved much, we have given them peace, justice and protection, and have on the whole lived up to our own Christian principles." Much as we desire political development in the Sudan and a new understanding with Egypt, we must on no account forget our obligations.

### Elections in Iraq

THE kaleidoscope of the Middle East has at least produced one reasonably encouraging picture—though the general outlook is still alarming. After the disturbances in Baghdad before Christmas it looked as if the elections in Iraq might prove troublesome both in their immediate conduct and in their wider consequences; but they have happily gone quite otherwise. A high percentage of voters polled without disturbance, and have given a strong working majority to the veteran General Nuri Pasha, who has always stood for constructive reform in Iraq itself and also for good sense in international relations. It may thus be hoped that the Iraqi people will begin to benefit substantially by the very large revenue which their country will now be deriving from oil and that one Arab Government at least may spare us the now too familiar displays of pathological xenophobia.

### Kenya Settlers: a Fine Record

THE gloomy sameness of all this winter's news from Kenya has been relieved by one outstanding and most hopeful feature, namely, the courage, restraint and breadth of mind shown by the settler population. There have, of course, been a few extremist and impatient objurgations which have received prominence, as always, in English news-

papers. One such exhibition took place at a meeting at Thompson's Falls, and it was really understandable, partly because that is an area where men and women have been living in acute and constant danger for four months without much sign of relaxation, and partly because the population there contains a considerable proportion of Afrikaner immigrants, who stem from a different tradition. In marked contrast was another larger and much more representative meeting at Nakuru, which closely adjoins the danger zone; and still more praiseworthy is the wise and moderate leadership, both in the country and in the Legislative Council.

### Too Little Praise at Home

MR. OLIVER LYTTTELTON and Mr. Harold Macmillan both paid warm and eloquent tributes in the last Kenya debate to the bearing of the settler community; and as Mr. Lyttelton spoke early in the afternoon, it is strange that this part of his speech was not included in the reports published by our newspapers, nor even in that of *The Times*, which, we think, still maintains its own Parliamentary reporters. Most of the speeches in the debate were good, but there were three abusive and destructive ones, which, of course, received the meed of extensive publication.

We therefore welcome and identify ourselves wholeheartedly with the protest against the denigration of our own people and Government in Africa recently published by *Time and Tide*, which is not a party journal.

The pattern of attack [it said] is symptomatic and familiar. It is the off-repeated unity of effort of those who, in Kipling's words, "are content to work for the organized bankruptcy of whatever is of good repute, including the systematic betrayal of our friends." All over the world we have done it, over and over again.

We hope *Time and Tide* will allow us to say that we could not ourselves have expressed our own feelings better, and to thank it for a most timely remonstrance.

### Demands for Closer Control

THE point is of great importance, because it is now quite patent that there can be no adequate progress either with suppression of the Mau Mau revolt or with the essential constructive business of securing inter-racial co-operation in social reform and in government, if more initiative and power is not given to the unofficial population. Their leaders, who are in daily contact with the realities, are persuaded that more drive and imagination are needed in disposing of the Mau Mau evil and giving support to the loyal Kikuyu, who have shown the most splendid constancy, but are evidently not even now receiving adequate protection or consideration. There is also a demand for closer control

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

of the anti-Mau Mau operations and for the retirement elsewhere of the leading officials who were responsible for ignoring, despite repeated warning, the growth of the Mau Mau organization.

### Constructive Emphasis

THE great virtue of this unofficial movement is that its emphasis is not mainly on repression, but on construction. In a striking signed statement of policy which we take from the *Nakuru Weekly News* Mr. Michael Blundell, while very rightly insisting on the necessity of restoring law and order, protested strongly against the imputation that he and his followers were chiefly concerned with pains and penalties. Claiming the right to closer participation in the tasks of government, he emphasized the need for a broad constructive policy:—

There is hardly a social or economic facet of our life on which it will not touch—our policy for African housing, African land tenure, our wage economy and opportunities for us to let the real leaders of the Africans know what we are thinking and why, and for them to design with us the pattern of their own thoughts, hopes and fears.

This indeed is the spirit needed ; and while the Report of the Royal Commission (just about to start its work) must be awaited, we trust that it will produce at least some interim recommendations with celerity, and that the unofficial members of the Legislative Council may meanwhile be brought into the consultations and committee work which must precede action.

### Parliamentary Procedure

AS we go to press the House of Commons is about to debate a Private Member's Motion calling for a Select Committee "to enquire into the possibilities of improvement in the House's methods of conducting its Business." It is not many years since a Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedure produced an important series of reports, and one doubts whether the appointment of a fresh Committee at the present juncture could serve any very useful purpose. Many Members feel that the House's methods of conducting its Business are unsatisfactory, but there is very little agreement among the enthusiasts as to what changes should be made. There are those like Mr. Christopher Hollis who would like to relieve the pressure on the House of Commons by establishing a kind of third Chamber, a House of Industry, whose relations to the House of Commons would be somewhat analogous to those of the Church Assembly. There are those who would like to see the House of Commons assimilate its procedure in some degree to that of a large Local Authority by devoting at least one day each week entirely to Committee work. And there are some Labour Members (happily a minority) who would like to see the House adopt "office hours"—say from 10 till 6. In view of these

very wide divergencies of opinion among the enthusiasts for reform, it really would be impossible for a Select Committee which was at all representative to produce any agreed or even coherent report.

### **The Growth of Secondary Legislation**

**A**LL Members of Parliament will agree that there are too many late sittings, and that the Parliamentary time-table is overloaded. What is not always realized is that the present situation is by no means entirely due to the very narrow majorities of the present Government and its predecessor. Thus, one of the principal reasons for the many prolonged sittings is that, compared with twenty-five years ago, a much higher percentage of Members wish to take a prominent part in Debates, and speeches tend on the average to be longer. Again, there is a far greater volume of secondary departmental legislation. Each Government in turn tries to reduce this kind of legislation to a minimum, and there are indeed few less inspiring sights in the House of Commons than that of a Minister trying to explain the meaning of a somewhat ill-drafted clause which he has failed altogether to understand, with the aid of hasty scrawls from his Permanent Officials in the box, dutifully handed to him by his Parliamentary Private Secretary. But the fact remains that a considerable number of Parliamentary days each year are spent discussing legislation which no one, save certain Permanent Officials, fully understands, and this applies to delegated legislation, as well as to Bills.

### **Clogging of "The Usual Channels"**

**A** HEAVY volume of departmental legislation is particularly dangerous because it presents so many opportunities for obstructionist tactics by the Opposition. One of the features of the present Parliament has been the small but industrious group of Socialist back-benchers, led by Mr. Geoffrey Bing, who have sought to delay Government business by talking at great length on measures which are really non-controversial—or even formal, such as the Isle of Man Customs Bill. In the last Session, Mr. Bing and his friends were able to upset the Parliamentary time-table very considerably; and though they have been far less successful during the present Session, their activities are still one of the many reasons why the Government have been forced so frequently to ask their supporters to sit late. What is more, Members have had the very strong impression that the activities of Mr. Bing and his friends, however unpopular among a section of their Party, have not been discouraged by supposedly responsible Opposition leaders, such as Mr. Chuter Ede. It is not so much a reform of procedure which is needed, as a recognition that the Parliamentary machine can only work properly if all Members are prepared to accept certain conventions. One of the most valuable of these conventions concerns agreements reached through "the usual channels"—a small committee formed from the two Front Benches—on the amount



## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

of time to be allocated to the various items of Business. If "the usual channels" lose control, and these agreements are not honoured on the floor of the House, the Government of the day will have to employ those weapons—such as the guillotine—which limit freedom of discussion.

### Standing Committees

IN one most important respect, however, the present overloading of the Parliamentary time-table is the direct consequence of the Government's small majority. The present balance of Parties means that the Government can only command a majority of one on a Standing Committee, and it is for this reason that the Committee stages of both the Transport and the Steel Bills are being taken on the floor of the House. The disadvantages of this procedure are enormous. It consumes a very large amount of Parliamentary time, which the Government can ill spare; it means that the time devoted to the discussion of detailed amendments is necessarily inadequate; and, not least, it frays the tempers of Members by demanding their continuous attendance for many hours at a stretch. The strain on Members is made even greater when, as in the case of the Transport Bill, the Opposition have sent out a three-line whip to their supporters which prohibits all "pairing." Experience certainly seems to have shown that all major Bills containing large numbers of clauses, except the Finance Bill, are best sent upstairs to a Standing Committee, where they can be examined by the relatively small number of Members who are really well informed on the particular subject at issue. In our opinion, it should not have proved impossible to find twenty-five Conservatives who knew something about Transport, and who were prepared to give continuous service two mornings a week until the Committee Stage was completed; while any amendments carried against the Government in the course of these proceedings could have been annulled on the Report Stage. It is only fair to say that the Government did seriously consider sending the Transport Bill upstairs, but decided the risk would be too great. In our view, the practice of devoting weeks of Parliamentary time to legislative detail is bound to result in bad tempers and bad Bills.

### Illusion and Reality

THERE is just one further word which needs to be added. Members of Parliament should be chary of painting too gloomy a picture when they are talking to their constituents about life in the House of Commons. Those whose knowledge of Parliament is entirely derived from what they read in the Press may gain the false impression that party bickering is the chief occupation of most Members. It is important to emphasize that the scenes which are given most space in the Press represent only a very small fraction of the Parliamentary day, and that the House of Commons is, in fact, a tolerably industrious community, many of whose Members work exceedingly hard without any recognition for their labours. We

see it stated quite frequently that Parliament itself is now falling into some disrepute in this country. If this is so, then it is clearly the duty of Members to explain and to justify its procedure to those who are ignorant of it, and to dwell on the very many rewarding aspects of Parliamentary life as well as its occasional inconveniences.

### Iron Foundries and the Steel Bill

THE Government's amendments to the Iron and Steel Bill should go a long way towards satisfying the iron founders, who have so strongly resented the decision to include their activities within the purview of the projected Board. One particularly welcome amendment, to Clause 5, exempts foundries altogether from the duty to submit development schemes to the Board for approval—a wise decision, since out of some 2,000 foundry schemes carried out since the War, only about a dozen cost more than £250,000, and most of these related to tied foundries which formed an integral part of certain engineering concerns. Another amendment provides that the Board shall have power to fix maximum prices of forgings and castings only in particular cases where monopoly conditions or restrictive practices exist, and where the Board have been unable, by voluntary means, to ensure that prices are reasonable. Finally, the obnoxious Clause 13, which dealt with the power of the Board to obtain information, has been completely re-written. The Board's powers in this respect have been far more precisely defined, while the penalties for failure to supply information will not exceed those already laid down in the Statistics of Trade Act, 1947.

Mr. Duncan Sandys deserves praise for the combination of doggedness and courtesy which he has shown throughout the private discussions on this question. He has never wavered in his determination to adhere to his decision that the foundries should not be excluded altogether from the Bill. But within these limits, he has been most accessible both to Members of Parliament and to industrialists who wished to state their case. His new proposals represent a compromise which should receive—from the Conservative side—almost unanimous assent.

### "C" Licences and the Levy

THROUGHOUT the Committee stage of the Transport Bill, Ministers put up an extremely good defence, and many Government supporters must have gone away for the Christmas recess more confident about the Bill's prospects than they had been some months earlier. In particular, Mr. Reginald Maudling, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, put up a very able defence for the levy, and those business-men who still regard this imposition as indefensible must at least do Mr. Maudling the courtesy of replying to his arguments, and not merely repeat the stock objections as though no Government spokesman had ever taken note of them.

Mr. Maudling pointed out, very reasonably, that "C" licence-holders

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

really cannot complain that the Bill offers them nothing in return for the levy which is being imposed on them:

Since 1947 many industries and many businesses have developed their own fleets of "C" licence vehicles, not because they wanted to, but because they were dissatisfied with the service provided by the nationalized undertakings. . . . All of us who have any contact with trade and industry know that industrialists have found that the services provided by the Road Haulage Executive have not in every case been satisfactory. . . . They have found, for example, that, whereas the people who used to do the work, the private hauliers with whom they were used to dealing, would send the same driver every time to handle their particular goods, under the Executive their goods have suffered because a different driver was sent from the depot to handle them on successive occasions. . . . Quite clearly, industrialists and business-men do not want to invest their capital at present in running their own "C" licence vehicles, if they can get the same function satisfactorily performed by public hauliers, the "A" and "B" licence-holders.

This is an important point. Labour members have repeatedly claimed that the growth in "C" licences since the war has had nothing to do with nationalization. They attribute it to a desire to do away with the middle-man, and to the desire of many firms to retain personal charge of their goods until they are actually delivered. No doubt "C" licences would have expanded since the War in any event, even if long-distance public road haulage had not been nationalized, because the policy of controlled inflation deliberately pursued by the Socialist Government inevitably resulted in a disproportionate growth of the consumer goods industries. But the fact remains that the inefficiency of the nationalized road services did cause many business-men to become "C" licence-holders, not because they wanted to, but out of necessity; and more efficient long-distance road services should certainly result in there being less demand for "C" licences, and so less empty mileage covered.

### Lord Selborne's Appeal

IN his annual statement as Chairman of the National Provincial Bank, Lord Selborne appeals very strongly for a reduction in Government expenditure, because, as he says, "the present level of taxation of the individual is such as to make private saving virtually impossible." The Government have announced that they are determined to increase the flow of capital for development in the Commonwealth. This can only be achieved "by Budget surpluses and Government investment, or by individual investment," of which the latter method is "infinitely preferable." But private investors cannot play their part so long as taxation remains at its present levels. The Government's policy should be to give everyone "the maximum incentive to exert and deny himself for the benefit of his family." "So will the State best prosper, for the nation is but the total of the families contained therein." So also will the Commonwealth best prosper.

Lord Selborne is distinguished no less as an elder statesman than as a business-man, and we trust that this appeal, which others inside and outside Parliament have also been making, will not be lost on Mr. Butler.

### Great Officers at the Coronation

THE appointment of great officers to perform ceremonial duties at the Coronation was on strictly traditional lines. Though half the individuals concerned are outstanding war leaders, and therefore of Commonwealth stature, most of the others are men of titular distinction and no doubt of personal worth in the United Kingdom, but without any claim to pre-eminence in that wider community for which the Coronation is, or should be, designed. It is indeed a pity that the chance has been missed of persuading new figures—men famous in the Commonwealth—to appear in the ancient parts. Persuasion might have been necessary, because there is some diffidence in this matter, but we cannot believe that it would have been applied in vain.

### Who Will Come to the Abbey?

AT the risk of becoming tedious, we must express our concern at the way in which arrangements for the Abbey ceremonial are being made. Tradition must of course be maintained, but tradition is a living, changing thing, not a fossil. The Coronation has now a wider significance than it had when Queen Victoria was crowned, or even when King George VI was crowned. It is therefore vital that this year's ceremony should show forth that wider significance clearly and unmistakably.

We do not suggest that the religious service should be changed, nor do we think that many people—even non-Christians—would wish it to be. But on the secular side the Abbey arrangements must surely be transformed. There must not be too many representatives of the United Kingdom present, and as many delegates as possible must come from the Queen's other realms and territories. So far no figures have been given of relative strengths in the Abbey. Can it be that the various Governments involved are unwilling to expose their inadequacy to the public view? We can only repeat that it will be a disgraceful act of small-mindedness by the whole Commonwealth if this year's plans are not concerted in a truly imaginative spirit.

# GERMANY BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

By ALAN BULLOCK

I HAVE recently spent some time in the British and American Zones of Germany. As, on my arrival, the aeroplane began to lose height and the pattern of the Rhineland to unfold beneath, I had that old sensation of tension which I never fail to experience on entering Germany. Throughout my lifetime (I was born in 1914) Germany has been the crux of almost every European question; for ten years Great Britain and Germany have been engaged in two exhausting wars (the only two Powers which fought each other from beginning to end of both wars); between the wars, as before 1914, our relations with Germany were the most intractable problem in British foreign policy; even to-day, although everything else is overshadowed by the conflict with the Soviet Union, it can be argued that Germany is by far the most important, and certainly the thorniest, issue of the Cold War. Little wonder, then, if any Englishman, aware of the part Germany has played in the fortunes of his own country and of Europe in this century, should feel that to cross the German frontier is still something different from crossing the Channel or waking up on the other side of the Alps.

The physical impact of Germany on the traveller is immediate. Wherever you go there is the same crude contrast between ruins and reconstruction. For three years after the War Germany was a dead country, its cities derelict. The cumulative effect of the destruction on anyone who travelled through the Rhineland and the Ruhr was over-

whelming. The ruins will not disappear for years, but in the last year they have ceased to dominate the scene; they have become the dramatic background for the economic recovery which has transformed Western Germany—the German “miracle”, as the local press calls it.

In every German town I visited—Cologne, Düsseldorf, Essen, Dortmund, Hanover, Frankfurt—there is a sense of hectic activity. Everyone is in a hurry. New buildings are going up on every side: in Hanover I could not sleep because building operations went on across the street all night long. The roads are crowded with traffic, almost all of it German-built cars and lorries. New factories and office buildings are being opened every week: in the Ruhr the blast furnaces and rolling mills are at work again and the centre of Essen at night rivals Brussels with its garish lighting. On the way from Hanover to Frankfurt (in a superb new diesel-train which British Railways would find it hard to equal) I passed long lines of Volkswagen cars on their way for export; at more than one of the hotels at which I stayed there were delegations or business-men from abroad coming to Germany to place orders for a score of different products.

True, there is another side to this picture. The contrast between the wealth to be seen in the smart new shops and restaurants in Düsseldorf and the poverty in the ill-lit back streets only a stone's-throw away is as sharp as anywhere in Europe. Only in Munich did I see people smile or laugh: the



faces I saw in the streets or railway carriages in other towns were furrowed with anxiety and grey with fatigue. People work hard for long hours; housing is desperately short; something like every fifth person in Western Germany is a refugee from the lost Eastern Provinces, the Sudetenland or the Russian Zone. Quite apart from the legacy of human misery left by the War, hunger, want and insecurity haunt a society which has little time or pity to spare for the poor, the unfortunate and the unsuccessful.

Yet, however rough and painful the process, the national economy is being visibly rebuilt. More people are at work, and this Christmas, with prices beginning to show a fall, the shops were thronged with people with more to spend than a year ago and more to buy. Recovery began later in Germany than in any part of Western Europe and had to start from a lower level; but once it started it has gained momentum rapidly. The dynamo is beginning to hum again, and the Germans as well as the French have begun to detect the note of power which it gives out.

For the political implications of the German recovery cannot be ignored. For eight years Germany has been a blank on the map of Europe, a vacuum of power. Now the vacuum is beginning to fill up and for the first time since the War Germany will soon have to be taken into account as an independent, and unpredictable, factor in international politics.

Sooner or later this was bound to happen, but it has occurred more quickly than anyone was prepared for, largely as a result of the quarrel between the West and Russia. When the diplomatic history of that quarrel comes to be written, few passages will make more interesting reading than the history of the Western decision to re-arm Germany. Did anyone foresee the present

situation in which, while the politics of France and Germany have been bedevilled by this decision—not to mention the effect on Russia and Germany's other neighbours to the East—the West has so far failed to secure any military advantage in the shape of a single German soldier or a single German factory producing arms? In the long run, this may prove a short-sighted view, but in the long run, as Lord Keynes once remarked, we are all dead.

The Germans themselves are divided and confused about the future which has suddenly begun to open up before the Federal Republic. On the one hand, there is the policy, which Dr. Adenauer has pursued with courage and persistence, of binding Germany to the Western alliance and of building, in partnership with France, a Western Union round the Schuman Plan and the European Army. To this no clear-cut alternative has been put forward, but doubts and criticisms of Adenauer's policy are more widespread in Germany than is generally recognized abroad.

The first and most deeply felt objection is that this would mean accepting the present division of Germany as permanent. To many of the refugees from the East who still dream of returning to their homes this is intolerable; to all Germans the prospect of a Germany without Brandenburg, Saxony or Thuringia, a Germany without Dresden, Leipzig and possibly without Berlin, is disturbing.

To appreciate the force of this feeling, it is necessary to drive within sight of the Chinese Wall which the Communists have erected right across Germany. The "Blue Gentian" Express which runs daily between Hamburg and Munich passes for part of its journey within sight of the Iron Curtain. Standing up to stare out of the carriage window, it was a shock to see metaphor so literally translated into reality.



## GERMANY BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

Peering through the flurries of snow, I could make out a wide swath cut through the trees and a line of barbed wire marking its edge. The roads were empty of traffic; the occasional hamlet or farmhouse built in the lee of the hills showed no sign of life; the signposts pointed meaninglessly into that other half of the world which stretches from the Harz to Korea. It was a grim reminder of the fact, which few Germans can forget for long, that the Cold War not only divides the world, but cuts their own country and their own people in two.

With the destructiveness of war so plainly before their eyes, the Germans are not at all eager to see their country turned into a European Korea. The argument that in helping to defend the West they would be defending themselves makes little impression. In that case, they reply, Germany should be admitted to N.A.T.O. on equal terms with her partners and not asked to supply mercenaries to fight for the Americans, the British and the French in the style of eighteenth century Hessians. There is no sign of enthusiasm for military service among the younger men, even in a German Army. Nor are the industrialists of the Ruhr and Rhineland much attracted to rearmament: they prefer to capture the export markets of their British rivals and avoid the heavy burden of taxation which rearmament will add to the Federal budget. Many Germans still cling to the belief that Germany can somehow remain neutral in the conflict between Russia and the West, or, like the Social Democrats, argue that there must be some way in which the unity of Germany can be restored by negotiation.

To the outsider such arguments have an air of unreality, but I heard them repeated too often to doubt that they are widely held views. Too many Germans, as Dr. Adenauer told the

Bundestag at the end of last year, are inclined to overestimate the strength of the cards they hold and to imagine that they can either drive a harder bargain with the West, or play off the West against the East. This is a dangerous illusion which would not survive the withdrawal of American support by one day, but which may wreck the chances of strengthening Western Europe by inducing the Germans to hold out for a higher price in return for their co-operation. It is the measure of Dr. Adenauer's statesmanship that he has never let himself be tempted into over-playing his hand, but he is very widely criticized for failing to win bigger concessions from the Western Powers and this may yet cost him the next elections.

The Chancellor himself, however, is not free from blame. I talked to a number of Germans who supported Dr. Adenauer's foreign policy and condemned the opposition to it as largely irresponsible, but who were highly critical of the way in which he had presented his case to Parliament and the electorate. Like Gladstone trying to get Home Rule through the Parliament of 1886, Adenauer is an old man in a hurry, and much that was said of Gladstone then is repeated of Adenauer now. He is accused of being high-handed and secretive, too inclined to rush his colleagues into commitments which they have not had time to discuss, so convinced that he is right and disdainful of the Opposition that he fails to recognize the strength of the doubts they represent. Impressed (again like Gladstone) with the need to act quickly before the chance of carrying through his policy has gone for good, the Chancellor is in danger of outstripping a public opinion he has failed to carry with him. Indeed, his opponents accuse him of deliberately trying to commit the German people over their heads before they

have a chance to express their views.

These criticisms do less than justice to the Chancellor's political stature, but they point to a serious weakness in his position. The sudden reversal in Allied policy from insistence on the evils of militarism and the permanent disarmament of Germany to a demand for her immediate rearmament has produced confusion and cynicism, especially among the younger generations. In such a situation there is only one resort for a democratic government: to submit the issue to the people and let them decide for themselves. If democracy is to mean anything in Germany, surely it must mean the right of the German people to be consulted on an issue as big as this before they are committed.

Why, then, does the Chancellor not take the issue to the country without waiting for the elections which in any case must be held in September? To this question I received two answers. The first was that democracy is not yet sufficiently established in Germany to risk such drastic tactics. Democracy in Germany, one trade union leader told me, is still a set of formal institutions, a form of political procedure; it is not yet a habit of mind, a political attitude. Once the E.D.C. Treaties are ratified and the Chancellor can point to such concrete advantages as the end of the occupation régime, the replacement of the High Commissions by Ambassadors, and the achievement of at least a qualified sovereignty for the Federal Republic, he will be in a much stronger position to appeal to the electorate. The mass of the people, I was told, would not understand being asked to make such a choice for themselves, but they might accept and underwrite a *fait accompli*. Once Dr. Adenauer has got the Treaties through the Bundestag, he can face an election with far more confidence: hence the anxiety of the

Opposition to delay ratification at all costs and their appeal to the Supreme Court at Karlsruhe.

The second answer to my question reinforces the first. The issues of foreign policy and re-armament have split instead of uniting the democratic parties. The bitterest opposition to Adenauer's policy comes, not from the Nationalist Right, but from the party which claims, with some justice, to be the bulwark of German democracy, the Social Democrats. The blame for the quarrel between Adenauer and Schumacher is hotly disputed, but the result is obvious. German democracy is not yet strong enough for the leading democratic parties—Adenauer's C.D.U. and the S.P.D.—to indulge in so violent a contest without grave harm to their common interests. Hopes of a change of policy since Schumacher's death have not so far been fulfilled; the Social Democrats have taken up a position from which it is hard for them to withdraw and they continue their attack on the Government with every device which they can find. The only people who can derive satisfaction from such a situation are those on both the Right and the Left who are no more fond of the Bonn Republic than they were of the Weimar régime and who are naturally delighted to see its supporters doing their best to discredit each other. In the meantime, say the Chancellor's admirers, the Social Democrats' campaign leaves him with no alternative but to get the Treaties ratified before he faces the electorate.

Whether the Chancellor's tactics will prove successful the next few months will show. I returned from Germany, however, with the conviction that the German elections of this year are next only to the recent American presidential election in their importance for the future of Western Europe. One is bound to ask, what will happen if Dr.

## GERMANY BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

Adenauer is defeated? The possibilities are disturbing. Can the embryonic European Defence Community survive such a setback or will the rather laborious business of negotiating Germany's place in Western Europe have to be begun again with a public opinion which—in France as well as in Germany—will be much less ready to compromise than it was when Dr. Adenauer and M. Schuman began their co-operation?

Those who share the views which Lord Norwich expressed in these columns last month may perhaps feel relief at the failure of a premature attempt to bring Western Germany into the Western alliance, but they deceive themselves if they think it will be possible to restore the safeguards of occupation which have been reduced and are now to be abandoned in return for German participation in the E.D.C.

The clock cannot be put back and the progress towards the recovery of Germany's national sovereignty which has already taken place cannot be undone. A Germany which refuses to underwrite Dr. Adenauer's initiative will be more, not less, intractable.

With these uncomfortable thoughts in mind I felt only a temporary sense of relief as the train left the lights of Cologne behind and swung away towards the Dutch frontier. The German problem is not so easily left behind, least of all for an Englishman who allows himself to speculate, as Lord Norwich did last month, on the contribution which his own country has made—or failed to make—to the success of the experiment in Western European co-operation which will be put to the test at this year's German elections.

ALAN BULLOCK.

## FINLAND AND RUSSIA

By EDWARD CRANKSHAW

**I**T is the most salutary experience in the world to move across into the shadow of the Iron Curtain and live among people who have the Russians as their next-door neighbours. An annual excursion of this kind is, for a professional commentator on Soviet affairs, caught up in the lunatic atmosphere of the Cold War, one way of keeping relatively sane. Because the nearer you get to Russia, and the farther from Washington, the more you are able to breathe freely and think clearly. London is better than Washington; Paris is better than London; Berlin and Vienna better than Paris; Belgrade better still. But the best of all by far, because the closest and most vulnerable, is Helsinki, the capital of Finland.

Consider the situation of the Finns; it has all the ingredients of a lethal nightmare for Senator McCarren. There are four million Finns. They share a long boundary with the Soviet Union which has recently taken from them rich and extensive areas in the North and the South-East. Helsinki, their capital, is only 100 miles from the Russian frontier, to the East; and it is covered to the West by the Soviet enclave at Porkkala on the Gulf of Finland. The Baltic approaches to Helsinki are dominated by the Northern coast-line of Soviet, Polish and East German territory. On top of all this the Finnish Parliament has 43 Communist deputies out of 200, and these 43 deputies are elected by a solid block of revolutionary-minded voters—though most of these

are not, of course, Communists in the Stalinist sense ; only in Senator McCarthy's sense, which may mean anything.

And yet Finland works, and seems beautifully unconscious of the fact that she has no business at all to be alive.

It is true that in Washington and London we have in one way a more difficult task than they have in Helsinki : we have to make great and difficult decisions affecting the peace of the whole world. It is also easy to say that the calm of Vienna and Berlin is a fatalistic calm. There people live on the slopes of a volcano which may erupt and destroy them overnight : there is nothing to be done but go through the motions of living and hope for the best. There is also, of course, a certain fatalism in the atmosphere of Finland. But there is a great deal more besides. The Finns have an active role to play, and they are playing it remarkably well. We can profitably learn from them not only how to conduct ourselves with decency and dignity in face of a standing menace, but also something about the realities of the Cold War and the policy of Stalin.

After the war many Western observers took it for granted that the Soviet Union would take over Finland. I did not share this assumption, which is based on the theory that Stalin is intent on acquiring territory *for its own sake*, or on conquering, piece by piece, the world. There is no hard evidence for this assumption, which I believe to be mistaken. And there was no particular reason why Stalin should have taken over Finland. It is true that Finland had once been part of the Tsarist Empire—the only part which Stalin has not regained. But even under the most reactionary Tsars the Finns had been treated differently from the other foreign peoples under the Russian yoke and had been allowed a good deal more

freedom of thought and action than, say, the Poles. It is true that between 1939 and 1945 the Finns had fought against the Russians twice and had caused Stalin a great deal of inconvenience and damage. But on the first occasion Stalin himself had gone to war to achieve a limited strategic objective ; so that the Finnish action was, from his point of view, perfectly reasonable self-defence, though a great deal more determined and effective than he had been led to expect. As for the second occasion, for the Finns to join with the Nazis against the Russians who had so recently wrecked their country was also, seen in cold blood (as Stalin habitually sees these things) a reasonable action. And afterwards, to make that sort of thing impossible in future, Stalin insisted on further cessions and safeguards. At the same time he demanded what looked like a crippling total of reparations, which Finland undertook to pay.

Whether he thought Finland would break down under the strain of reparations and give the Communists their chance, it is impossible to say. He may have done so. But the Finns did not break down. Far from it. The reparations burden drew them together and stimulated them to extraordinary efforts. In 1948 the Kremlin, as a grand gesture, decided to reduce the amount of reparations still to be paid. Late last summer the whole debt was finally paid off. Finland had worked her passage and more than earned her independence. It was a remarkable and admirable achievement.

On his side, Stalin had Finland just where he wanted her. He had taken 260 million dollars' worth of reparations. He had the Petsamo nickel mines in the Far North and a great deal of valuable territory in Eastern Karelia. He had cut Finland off from the Arctic Ocean, removing a potential threat to



## FINLAND AND RUSSIA

Murmansk. He had pushed the frontier away from Leningrad. And, at Porkkala, on a fifty years' lease, he had secured an invaluable Soviet base across the Gulf of Finland from Tallinn. In addition to all this he had a valuable treaty which, in effect, forbids Finland (even if she wanted to) to join NATO, and guarantees Finnish resistance, with or without Russian assistance, against Germany, *or any country allied with her*, who may commit an act of aggression against Finland herself or against the Soviet Union through Finnish territory. This treaty, in effect, gives Stalin the right to occupy Finland should he ever feel himself threatened from that quarter. Whether he would regard the accession of Sweden to NATO and the establishment of a NATO base on Swedish territory as an act of aggression through Finland we do not know. Many people think he would. It is a matter of the deepest concern for both Sweden and Finland that this contingency should never arise. It should be a matter of concern for us as well, if only for the reason that so long as Finnish independence is preserved the Cold War will not have become absolute.

Many people also refuse to regard Finland's independence as real. It is, they say, a phoney independence. Finland, the argument runs, is entirely helpless and at the mercy of the Soviet Union. With the armed forces permitted her under the peace treaty she is incapable of resisting the Soviet Army and could never hope to repeat the epic of the Winter War of 1939-40. Stalin can move in any time he likes. He can, and does, either directly or through the Finnish Communist Party, force Finland to develop trade with the East at the cost of trade with the West. Even without military occupation he can ruin Finland at any moment he likes by cutting the prices he pays for her goods, or denying her the food she now imports

from the Soviet Union. And so on.

As far as it goes, that is true enough. But independence is a relative conception. Ever since the war Finland has preserved her own sovereignty and pursued her own way of life. It is a way of life based on capitalism and is as remote from the Soviet way of life, just down the road, as the American way of life is remote from the Soviet way of life. If anything, it is more free than the American way of life at this present moment of time, which is suffering from a powerful dose of thought control—a temporary aberration, we hope, but none the less actual for that. Stalin has plenty of allies in Finland; but they are all found duly labelled in the Communist Party. He has no allies like Senator McCarthy, who is worth a hundred thousand party members to Stalin in his attempts to disrupt and demoralize the Western world.

But to revert to independence. There is no absolute independence to-day. Finland is dependent on the Soviet Union. All small countries throughout the world to-day are in some degree dependent on larger countries. It is nonsense to say, as the Russians do say, that, for example, Britain and France have lost their independence because in some degree they depend on assistance from the United States and at times subordinate what they conceive to be their own long-range interests to American policy. It is equally nonsensical to say that Finland has lost her independence because, if he chose, Stalin could crush her at a blow. He has not yet crushed her, and Finland is indeed an independent sovereign state. She has to be extremely careful to commit no action which Stalin might construe as meaning active hostility towards the Soviet Union. I imagine that the United States would exact the same respect from any small country that found itself wedged against her frontier.

We are left with the simple and surely significant fact that, for one reason or another, Stalin has refrained from occupying Finland. He has neither absorbed this small, defenceless country into the U.S.S.R. nor yet set up a puppet government in the shadow of Soviet bayonets. There are several good reasons why Stalin should have chosen to leave Finland alone. Chief among these is the indigestibility of the Finnish people, which the Russians know a great deal about. But the Poles are also indigestible and gallant in their less methodical way. And yet Stalin has effectively taken Poland. He took Poland because he thought this necessary. And the first thing to ask is why he thought it necessary to take Poland but not Finland.

If, as so many believe, his main pre-occupation was the conquest of territory or the extension of the Communist-dominated world by all means short of general war, he would certainly have moved into Finland. The very fact that he has not done so suggests there is something wrong with this common assumption. All Stalin's acquisitions in Europe to date were called for by sound strategy. They were what would be expected of a Power with no moral scruples, obsessed by fear of attack from the West. Stalin, therefore, went to great trouble to acquire these territories—even though he made a muddle of Yugoslavia. Had he felt himself threatened through Finland, as he felt himself threatened through Poland and Czechoslovakia, he would quite coolly have acquired Finland too. To-day, after Korea, he might think twice about this, for fear of starting a general war. But there was a time when he could have taken Finland without any fear of a general war. And his restraint in this matter, it seems to me, was due to the fact that he saw no threat to the Soviet Union through Finland. And so long

as Sweden remains inviolate there can be no such threat. The continued existence of Finland, in a word, supports very strongly the belief that Soviet policy to date has been inspired by defensive mania rather than by a lust for conquest as such.

This is not to say that Stalin does not want to see Communism triumph throughout the world. Of course he does, and he will work ruthlessly, logically, and tirelessly to this ultimate end. He cannot feel safe so long as a strong anti-communist force continues to exist. It might be argued that defence pushed to its extreme limits is in fact offence; that there is nothing to choose between a Power which expands for the better protection of its heart than a Power which expands for love of conquest. It seems to me there is everything to choose between them. The emphasis of the one is on safety. The emphasis of the other is on risk.

So long as a country like Finland—and for that matter Sweden too—wedged between the two conflicting forces which dominate our world, can remain independent, the Cold War is still not absolute and the forgotten principle of the buffer state persists in at least a vestigial form. So long as this may last it means that the Soviet Union is thinking first of her own comfort and only secondly, if at all, of aggrandizement for its own sake—whether territorial, or ideological, or both. The continued existence of an independent Finland, in a word, is a fact of very great importance, and one too often left out of account in our fairly wild theorizing about Soviet intentions. One of the favourite tricks of Western statesmen is to ask the Soviet Union for actions to prove that it is not hell-bent on conquest—actions, not words. The Kremlin's restraint in the matter of Finland (there are other examples) may surely be seen as precisely such an action.



That is one moral. Another is that the Kremlin's restraint is based also on a healthy respect for the Finns. If the Finns had allowed themselves to be panicked, or had thrown up their hands in face of the immense task of paying the reparations demanded while rebuilding their own economy—or simply in face of the hopelessness of trying to do anything when at any moment the Bear could crush them with its hairy paw—if the Finns had behaved like this (as many people in many more happily situated lands are in fact behaving to-

day), then such chaos would have ensued that Stalin would have had no difficulty at all in engineering a *coup* which would have given him control of a demoralized people—a prize for the asking, too tempting to be refused. But the Finns refused to be demoralized. And they have taught the world the lesson that in the long march to world revolution the Kremlin will move only when it is strategically desirable and possible, or when the fruit is ripe to the point of rottenness.

EDWARD CRANKSHAW.

## COMING CHANGES IN UNITED STATES POLICY

By DENYS SMITH

SINCE President Eisenhower was selected because so many millions of Americans held it was "time for a change," changes there will have to be under his Administration. They may not be as drastic or as speedy as some people hoped and others feared, but they will come none the less. The two most important changes will be a new collective approach to the Far East and a new collective approach to financial and economic relations with Britain, the Commonwealth and the Western world. The first was made inevitable by campaign promises, the second by the inexorable pressure of events. Two general policies were advocated by the new President for the Far East during the Presidential campaign which at first sight appear contradictory. They were that American troops should be progressively withdrawn—"Asians should fight Asians"—and at the same time that more determined measures should

be taken against the Communist threat. Actually they are complementary.

State Department thinking has changed about China during the past two years. Nobody now believes that the Communist régime is a house of cards which will collapse at a tap. On the contrary, it is considered to be firmly established and at the same time to be as ruthless and determined as the Communist regime of Russia. Efforts by Chiang's forces on Formosa to reconquer China would only constitute ineffective taps, and the hope that eventually he might re-establish a friendly Nationalist Government in Peking have been abandoned. The State Department also have reason to believe that Asiatic governments which once saw the Chinese Communists as "agrarian reformers", very unlike the Russian Communists, have in the past two years become aware of the true nature and menace of Chinese Communism. The

same, so the Americans believe, is true of Western European thinking about China. Thus the two poles of thought in Washington and European capitals have been brought closer together.

The changed American view on the permanence of the Chinese Communist régime, and the changed European view (shared increasingly by the free Asiatic nations) on the nature and aims of that régime, make agreement on Far Eastern policy easier to achieve.

When the United States now talks of making use of Chiang's troops from Formosa it is thinking of using Chiang as an instrument of its own policy. Formerly there was a danger that the United States would allow itself to be used as an instrument of Chiang's policy. There are signs that in this new policy context London and the Western European Powers do not recoil with such alarm at American suggestions for "taking the wraps off Chiang" as part of a plan for dealing with Communist China. There is no danger of the United States becoming involved in the Chinese civil war or, as Churchill put it, of American armies wandering all over China. The purpose of using Chiang's troops will be the very opposite. By harassing the mainland opposite Formosa he will pin down Chinese troops and contribute to the policy of disengaging American forces from the mainland. He could, it is held, accomplish more by diversion than he could by direct participation in the Korean fighting.

Once American and Western policy towards Chiang can be harmonized there can be a more hopeful approach to harmonizing policy towards the whole of Asia. A step towards this goal was the recognition in Paris last December that the Indo-Chinese War was of common concern to the whole Western alliance. France can never attain its intended place in the defence structure

of Europe as long as it spends more on a stalemate situation in Indo-China than it receives in the way of American aid and as long as its trained troops and best officers are siphoned away from the European theatre.

The American tendency in the past has been to regard the struggle which it was waging against Chinese Communism in Korea as noble and necessary, but to consider the British and French struggles in Indo-China and Malaya, and the British occupation of Hong Kong, as manifestations of an out-moded and undesirable colonialism. Americans have complained of lack of British and French interest in Korea, but have in the past seldom realized that they appeared to show a lack of interest in the other fighting fronts of Asia. Britain appeared, in the extreme form of this American conception, to be ready for limitless appeasement of the Chinese Communists to prevent the loss of Hong Kong, while on the other side of the Atlantic the extreme view took the form of fearing America would almost prefer to see Hong Kong in Communist than in British hands as a desirable move towards the liquidation of the British Empire. Even if Korea is still, in Eisenhower's words, "the most dramatic and most painful phase" for Americans of the fight against Communism, a recognition of the fact that the whole of Asia is one problem, and that the wars in Korea, Indo-China and Malaya are all parts of one war, makes it possible for America to attempt to change the Korean stalemate by supporting actions outside Korea.

There are other factors contributing to the view that American Far Eastern policy must be consolidated. The hard core of American interest in the Far East is to keep Japan out of Communist hands. Russia and China, whatever divergent interests they may have in the Far East, can unite on the great

## COMING CHANGES IN UNITED STATES POLICY

objective of winning Japan from the Western orbit. More and more the belief grows that the ultimate target of aggression in Korea was industrialized Japan. If Japan became Communist then all Asia would be lost and the balance of world power tipped so strongly in Russia's favour that the threat to Europe would be increased. But now the United States is beginning to realize that if the Western world loses South-East Asia it will lose Japan. There is therefore a community of danger linking the Korean and South-East Asian struggles.

The new American readiness to treat the whole of the Far East as a single problem may also pave the way for British association with the ANZUS Pact. The original American view was that it should guarantee to help Australia and New Zealand against a resurgent militaristic Japan, or an aggressive Communist Japan linked with China, and thus make it easier for those two countries to accept a Japanese peace treaty which included no restrictions on Japanese rearmament.

There were three main reasons why Britain was not asked to become a fourth partner. In the first place it was not held necessary, and the vehement British demand for membership came as a genuine surprise. British guarantees were held to be implicit in the Commonwealth relationship. The ANZUS Pact merely added American guarantees about which there might be more doubt. In the second place British Pacific interests were so wide, including South-East Asia and Hong Kong as well as the two Pacific realms of the Commonwealth, that America feared she might have to guarantee too much. As long as American Far-Eastern policy consisted of a number of separate improvisations to meet particular situations this was an important consideration. Now it is less important.

Finally the United States had set as its long-range objective the formation of a Pacific Pact similar to the Atlantic Pact. It believed that if there was too close a grouping of the non-Asiatic Powers in the Pacific, coolness towards a Pacific Pact on the part of the new Asiatic Governments and Japan would continue. The only Asiatic leader showing any enthusiasm for a Pacific Pact at the moment is President Quirino of the Philippines. But as recognition of the Chinese danger grows and as fears of Japan and memories of Japanese occupation lessen, the new independent governments of Asia will, it is expected, look upon the idea more favourably and will not be deterred by the prior existence of a "white man's" Pacific alliance.

There is no obvious link between changes in Far Eastern policy and changes in foreign economic policy, except that both would have probably been made even without a Republican victory. The Republican victory, however, means that coming changes in Far Eastern policy will be more extensive and may well mean that changes in foreign economic policy will be more difficult.

The pattern of modern trade, like that of the modern bathing dress, is marked by the existence of a gap. Americans tend to think that just as you could get rid of the mid-riff gap in the bathing dress by changing to a more old-fashioned habit, so you could get rid of the dollar gap in world trade by changing to more old-fashioned economic habits. For that reason the report of the Commonwealth Conference had a most reassuring effect in America. There was going to be a return to the Gods of the Copy-book Headings, such as increased thrift and more competition. The goal was "to produce and supply under competitive conditions an expanding flow of exports"; it was to

"adopt policies which increase the flow of savings." Britain and the sterling area appeared to have recognized that they had come to the end of the restrictionist road. Controls had been given a run for their money and the problems they were to solve were still there. So they were getting out of a dead-end street on to the road which led ultimately to convertibility.

For the past five years the gap between the world's dollar earnings and its dollar expenditures have been covered by the export of dollars by the United States under the Marshall Plan and other aid programmes. That path, too, was coming to a dead end. Europeans were growing as tired of receiving charity as Americans were of giving it. The catch-phrase "trade not aid" has caught the American fancy. There is sometimes a cynical response to European protests that it wishes to live on its own, a doubt that maybe this is like the young man, tired of living on a family allowance, who proposes to justify its being called a salary by making a mere pretence at earning it. Does it mean, the cynics ask, that Americans should be forced to buy more foreign goods even if they do not, value for value, equal American goods, or to invest

abroad even if the return from money invested is less than it would be if invested at home? But in general, particularly in places which count, the fact is accepted that the bridge across the dollar gap must be built from both ends. There are steps which America must take as well as Britain and the sterling area countries.

British and American views on increasing export sales, on foreign investments, on commodity agreements for raw materials, on convertibility and stabilization loans, are often different. There is no space at this time to go into the details of these differences. But it is at least an advance to find people on both sides of the Atlantic thinking about and examining the same subjects, and the differences themselves are more often in the emphasis given to the different parts of each problem than fundamental differences of substance. Thus at a time when most Western Governments are fired with a new determination to free themselves from a dependence on American aid, there is a change in American leadership and American thought which encourages the hope that permanent solutions will be found.

DENYS SMITH.

## PEERS AND THE NEW DEMOCRACY

By THE HON. JOHN GRIGG

THE monarchy will of course be the centre of interest this year, and the illustrated press of the world is already running riot with crowns, orbs, sceptres and "informal studies" of the Royal Family. But at the same time the public will have its

eye on another institution which, like the monarchy, is ancient and colourful, which has its own traditional part to play in the Coronation Service, and which may also be regarded as one of the mysterious necessities of English life—the peerage. A coronet is a very

trivial object compared with the Crown, and a peer's or peeress's robes are of small account compared with the Queen's majestic robes of State. But the greater includes the less, and some of the intense glamour and fascination which belong to the monarchy belong too, and for the same reasons, to the peerage.

This institution is certainly *mysterious*, if only because it has existed for so long in a substantially unaltered form. It is also, in my opinion, *necessary*, which means that the mystery, or the need for it, can in the last resort be explained and rationalized. This is a most unwelcome task and one which, in more normal times, nobody would wish to undertake. There have been periods in our history when what I have called the "mysterious necessities" of our social and political system were taken for granted; when the mysteries were assumed to be necessary and there was no apparent desire to probe them or to ask awkward questions about them. But we are not now living in a period of that kind. Ours is an age, at best of disillusion, at worst of revolution; an age in which the most sacred and time-honoured things are being criticized, if not angrily assailed. Even in England, the home of tolerance and moderation, a restless spirit has been at work and is still very much alive. Thus, while the outward trappings of nobility continue to interest and amuse the public, we must not suppose that to everyone the need for a nobility such as ours is self-evident. The question must be lurking in many minds—and had therefore much better be brought out into the open—Is the peerage really necessary in the modern world and in the new democracy of Britain?

It must be said at once that there are two aspects of democracy which correspond, conveniently enough, to the two separate aspects of the peerage. One

of these aspects is social, and that I will consider first; the other is political. In both senses democracy in Britain is new. The historic features of our State are Parliamentary Government and Law; universal suffrage and social equality are late-comers. But though they have come late they have undoubtedly come, and together they have turned, or are turning, our nation into a democracy.

The ideal that all citizens should be equal is of course very largely unrealized; it is a desire rather than a fact. In some ways it is obviously unattainable; human beings are not created equal. Some people are by nature cleverer, handsomer, healthier, even kinder than others; and opportunity, in the sense of luck, is not given equally to all. But the aspiration towards equality remains. Within reason, it is a just and worthy aspiration. There should be no differences between man and man which are not natural or plainly in the public interest. By this test all our institutions, including the peerage, should be judged. When they are artificial, as most of them are, it is incumbent upon those who believe in them to show that they are useful and valuable. No sane person would deny that the peerage is a creature of human society. Is it therefore a benefit, or is it a blemish?

One argument against the peerage is that it engenders snobbishness. But this is surely superficial—a confusion of cause and effect. Snobbishness is a natural manifestation of human weakness, and it is certainly not confined to those communities in which official recognition is given in the form of titles. Indeed, the most virulent snobbishness is often to be found among people whose national tradition is republican and nominally egalitarian. The Americans are a good example of this. Not only do they tend, in practice, to set great store by the social in-



equalities of other countries which, in theory, they denounce, but in their own country they allow invidious distinctions to flourish which in England would be thought quite laughable. The "Social Registers" which are issued in New York and other American cities are far less easy to defend than "Who's Who" or "Debrett." The latter bear some relation to public service and merit; the former seem to be inspired by snobishness alone. It must not be thought, therefore, that when honours are abolished social humbug disappears; on the contrary, it is likely to become even more tiresome and pointless than it would otherwise be.

Much stronger than the objection to honours as such is the objection to hereditary honours, and to the "hereditary principle" in all its manifold applications. It is felt that the privileges of rank or wealth should only belong to those who have earned them, and should not be transmitted to their heirs, many of whom have only, in Beaumarchais' words, given themselves the trouble of being born. At first sight there is much to commend this point of view, and there will always be some people who, by their rotten behaviour, give it an added plausibility. But it is surely unwise to reject a whole system because of its incidental faults. The positive virtues of the hereditary system must be considered, and they will, I think, be found to outweigh its defects.

Impermanence is one of the nightmares of life on earth. Nothing seems to last. "Change and decay in all around I see." Individually we can do little to withstand the ravages of time; but collectively we can do more. By encouraging vital elements within itself to grow and thrive, society can achieve a measure of stability, and at the same time call forth the best efforts from its members. One such element is, of

course, the family, the prototype of society and the basic institution of mankind. With most people a powerful motive for doing well in general is the hope of being able to do well for their families. This may operate either as the will to found a family fortune and tradition, or as the will to improve that fortune and uphold that tradition. There need be no antagonism between this motive and the motive of public service; in a well-ordered State the two can be made, more often than not, to coincide. The State can, for instance, by conferring an hereditary honour, reward a man who has given outstanding service, and at the same time invite his descendants to serve their country with emulous zeal.

It should be noted that the British system of honours is remarkably unmercenary. The case for inherited wealth can be cogently stated and has already been hinted at; but it would be out of place to elaborate it here. It must suffice to remark that the hereditary principle is, in essence, indivisible. But wealth is not the only criterion in our country, for we have evolved a system of honours which costs the State nothing and which enables it to invest, as it were, in the future. The peerage in particular gives to British society a richness which is quite unsordid and a continuity which is neither purely abstract nor purely material. On a much larger scale the monarchy performs an identical function. It is indeed difficult to see how those who appreciate the merits of an hereditary monarchy can fail to appreciate the merits of an hereditary peerage.

But can we reconcile our ancient system with the new order which is coming into being, and which has for its theme the equality of citizens? The answer is that we can, but it is a conditional answer. Distinctions of rank



can only be retained if the attitude towards them is right. This condition implies a determined effort on the part of the whole community. Never again must it be thought that rank in itself bestows any *real* superiority; the superiority belonging to rank must be treated by all concerned as *formal*, and as existing only on sufferance. In the past the British peerage was saved from becoming an aristocratic caste by the wholesome effects of primogeniture. That was a great achievement, but a greater task lies ahead. We must strive to rid our country of the lingering poison of class-consciousness, without imposing upon it that bleak and clinical uniformity which is the leveller's dream. Contempt must therefore be heaped impartially upon those who practise social exclusiveness and upon those who are preaching social revolution. If we can acquire the spirit of equality without destroying quality we shall have performed one of those miracles of compromise of which, as a nation, we are justly proud.

So much for the social aspect of the problem. I have tried, very briefly, to justify the survival of hereditary honours in conditions of would-be social equality. Needless to say, the peerage comprises the bulk of hereditary honours in this country; but that is not all, because the bulk of the peerage constitutes the Second Chamber in our Parliament. It is not enough to vindicate lords; we have also to vindicate the House of Lords. We must ask ourselves whether it is possible to fit an assembly based upon inherited privilege into a political structure based upon universal suffrage.

There are plenty of people—by no means all of them on the Left—who would answer without hesitation that the House of Lords has had its day as an effective force in our Legislature. They would argue that in a democracy

only an elected Chamber is able to interpret, and fit to implement, the nation's will. And this would lead them to conclude either that the House of Lords should be reduced to total impotence, or that it should be replaced by a Chamber which might or might not be called the House of Lords, but the principle of whose composition would be elective rather than hereditary. The more popular view is probably the former; that our Parliament should become, in fact if not in name, a Single-Chamber Parliament, and that the House of Commons should be given unfettered power. But the assumption underlying both views is that democracy can only be expressed, in political terms, through some form of election, direct or indirect. Before I go any further I should like to question the validity of that assumption.

Of course, no political system can be called democratic unless it contains a representative body with predominant power, and unless that representative body is based upon the widest possible electorate. In our own case, I do not think we could fairly claim that our system was democratic until the vote was made universal and until the House of Commons had asserted its primacy as against the House of Lords. But it must never be forgotten that the voters of Britain are only able, as a rule, to express their will once in every five years, and that what emerges is at best only the will of a majority. Even if we had two elected Chambers instead of one, and even if there were more frequent Parliamentary elections, we could never be sure that the wishes of the *whole nation* were being adequately represented at any given moment. And apart from the injustice to which minorities must always be subject, how can there be any certain justice even for majorities? Politics are extremely complicated, but the casting of a vote

is absurdly simple—deceptively simple. When we go to the polls we are supposed to be deciding in favour of a detailed programme and that is what the demagogues assure us we are doing; but in fact we are only writing a cross against the name of some individual whom we are unlikely to know personally and who, if he is elected, will be less our servant than the servant of his Party. The idea that voters can fully comprehend all the issues at an election, or can give precise expression to their feelings in the act of voting, is a palpable myth. When democracy takes no other form than that of election we are in danger of becoming the victims of a confidence trick.

I do not mean to suggest that the elective element in our Constitution should be any less than it is at present; nor would I, on the other hand, favour a plebiscitarian system of government. But the points I have mentioned may have helped to throw some doubt upon the hocus-pocus of ballot-box democracy. It may also be pertinent to reflect that those who owe their position in Parliament to the caprice of an electorate may not always be the wisest, most fearless and most disinterested legislators. Lest there be any misunderstanding I will say once again that the elected body must, in a democracy, predominate; but when that has been duly allowed for there will still, I think, be something wanting for an ideal democracy. Alongside the elected body, and with just so much power as to mitigate its absolutism, there should be another assembly, not originating in any species of election, yet composed in such a way as to command public confidence and respect.

The House of Lords already fulfils some of the requirements of such an assembly. It has a great tradition of its own and it is made up of hereditary and newly created peers, many of whom are

eminent servants of the State. In the main it may be said to combine independence with a sense of responsibility. But there are two serious flaws in its present composition which prevent it from being, or at any rate from seeming, a fully qualified Second Chamber. Many peers are summoned to it who are not necessarily fitted to serve in Parliament and who, in many cases, have no wish to do so. That is one flaw, and the other is that the House of Lords appears to contain an automatic majority for the Conservative Party. Both these flaws must be removed if the House is to become the effective Second Chamber that it could and should be. Reform has for long been overdue and is now imperative.

For many years past the feeling has been current, and it has indeed been put on record by the House of Lords itself, that the mere inheritance of a peerage should not confer upon a man the right to sit in Parliament. In fact, not every peer is entitled to a seat; Scottish and Irish peers are exceptions to the rule. But those peers who are designated "of the United Kingdom," and who are by far the largest section of the peerage, still receive writs of summons as of right. Would it not be reasonable to limit according to some accepted standard the number of these peers who are summoned to sit in Parliament? A useful precedent may be the device whereby peers are enabled to qualify, in the first instance, for seats in the Abbey at this year's Coronation. A select range of qualifying categories (Privy Councillor, Knight of the Garter, Order of Merit, etc.) has been listed, and peers who come within this range will be entitled to seats in the Abbey, whatever may befall other members of the peerage. Procedure of this kind will always be open to criticism, but it is at least a rough-and-ready way of applying the test of fitness

to the principle of heredity. That principle gives us, in my opinion, the best possible foundation for a Second Chamber; it ensures continuity and it encourages independence of thought and action, which may so easily be lacking in an elected House. But hereditary status must be accompanied by clear evidence of merit, or it will carry no weight in our modern democracy.

The other problem which has to be faced is that of Party strengths in the House of Lords. At present it is generally thought that the Conservative Party has an overwhelming majority, and this is on the whole true, though the reason for it is not what the Marxists, with their usual morbid silliness, pretend. There is no irresistible "class interest" which turns peers into Conservatives, nor is the Conservative Party a "class" Party. Common sense may cause some peers to change their political allegiance when they are freed from the shackles of Party discipline; but the real explanation of Conservative preponderance in the Lords is quite simply that the Socialist Party, because of its fairly recent origin, has had less time to ennoble its supporters than has the Conservative Party. That is why the problem exists. How, then, is it to be solved?

There is no doubt whatever that Party strengths in the House of Lords could be made to bear some relation to the state of Parties in the country. A workable scheme could be found which would involve no process of election, but which in every Parliament would give an appropriate shape and balance to the Party element. It is impossible to enter here into the details of such a scheme, though I have done so in another publication; when writing broadly of the peerage it would be a mistake to dwell too closely upon the exact method of reforming the House

of Lords. But I am convinced that all important Party groups could be given fair treatment in a reformed House, and that this could be achieved without impairing its essential character, because the House would never consist exclusively of Party members and the last word would often lie with peers who received no Party whip.

The creation of more-life peerages is being advocated, but I must admit to feeling rather sceptical of this device. The peerage is an hereditary institution and it must stand or fall as such. There are already some life peers, the Bishops and the Law Lords, who have, so to speak, a special *raison d'être* in the House of Lords; and it might be argued that if in future certain peers were appointed for the special purpose of representing a Party these should in the same way be life peers. But it would be disastrous if the whole nature of the peerage were to be changed and it were to lose its firm basis in family tradition. On the whole I think it would be better if less were said about creating life peers, and more about limiting the number of hereditary peers who are required to do service in Parliament.

In conclusion, an incident may be recalled which, like many others that could be cited, makes the subject that I have been discussing glow with personal warmth and meaning. One evening last year the Queen went to see *The Young Elizabeth*, a play about her great predecessor, in which William Cecil is a leading figure and much of the action of which occurs at Hatfield. She was accompanied to the theatre by the present Lord Salisbury, who still lives at Hatfield and who, like his ancestor, is one of the Queen's most capable and devoted servants. Here, then, is a family tradition at work, and it is indeed a tradition of work and service. Would the State be any better

off, and would the people of Britain be any happier, if Hatfield were a State penitentiary and if Lord Salisbury were shorn of his title? Surely not. No sensible British democrat would wish to rid his country of those institutions which give it depth, diversity and

charm, and which have for so long been the envy of the world. In making all due concessions to the spirit of the age, we must never lose our proper reverence for the spirit of the ages.

JOHN GRIGG.

## FOUR CENTURIES OF THE ALEHOUSE

By C. L. SHAW

THE licensed trade celebrated last year the quatercentenary of the Act "for keepers of Alehouses and Tiplinghouses to be bound by Recognisance" and, at some hundreds of pre-1552 inns, four hundred years of the "good order and rule" which the Act made a condition of their continuing existence. According to the Royal Commission on Licensing, 1929-31, the Act of 1552 was "the foundation of all our legislation concerning the sale and consumption of intoxicating liquor, and all subsequent legislation has been mere amendment." It empowered Justices of the Peace to license alehouse keepers, to take bond of them for "the maintenance of good order and rule and against permitting unlawful games" and to "remove, discharge and put away common selling of ale and beer in alehouses where they thought meet and convenient."

The Act has special interest to-day, however, not because it was the foundation of our licensing laws, but because it made possible (the cynic would say inevitable) administrative activity which produced a fruitful crop of records concerning licensed houses. By causing alehouses to be licensed and registered,

it brought them more easily within the grasp of the administrator and the tax-gatherer. Special orders did not follow statute with the alacrity that would be shown to-day. But they came as inevitably. The first owed its origin to feminine vanity and outpaced by nearly twenty years the second, which was a result of that other elemental impulse to governmental activity, the need for revenue. Six years after the Act was passed, according to legend, Queen Elizabeth ordered that any alehouse signboard bearing a portrait that did her less than justice should be taken down and knocked into pieces. The other order came when the Privy Council, awakening to the revenue-yielding potentialities, called for a return of all alehouses and tippling houses "so that a tax might be laid upon them for the repair of the decayed haven of Dover." It is this return which is the most interesting result of the first real national effort at liquor licensing.

The replies constitute a survey of licensed houses in about half the country—a survey of a type essayed never before and not again until many years later. It is the first census of

## FOUR CENTURIES OF THE ALEHOUSE

licensed premises and the first of the licensing statistics nowadays prepared so concisely, but without sacrifice of comprehensiveness, by the Home Office. The returns are a well-known but little-used source of information on one aspect of social life in Elizabeth I's England. The historians of the inn have never done more than nibble at them; but then most books on the inn's history, to be frank, owe more to scissors and paste than they do to sessions at the Public Record Office. In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that the returns had before this year ever been assembled since they were first received by the Privy Council clerks. Moreover, the labour of reading and transcribing them is one which no author churning out a variant of *The Old Taverns of Old England* could afford to undertake.

Now that the returns have been assembled, copied in photostat and transcribed, however, what is the first impression they produce? Quite simply, it is one of an astonishing abundance of alehouses in Tudor England. Jocular references by Elizabethan chroniclers to streets consisting wholly of alehouses, and to rows of houses having an almost continuous red lattice over ground-floor windows, are seen to be not exaggerated. The twenty-three counties, with a few cities and boroughs, making the returns, had 12,093 alehouses, with 1,529 inns and 232 taverns. The number of publicans' licences (which would include many inns and hotels) to-day in the same area, with a population ten times as large as that 400 years ago, is little over 30,000.

Yorkshire (excluding York) with a population in 1545 estimated at 34,000, on the somewhat uncertain basis of the chantry survey of church communicants, had 3,503 alehouses—more than it has to-day, outside the county

boroughs. Excluding these large industrial centres, the counterpart of which did not exist four centuries ago, it has 3,276 publicans' licences serving 1,585,960 people. York, believed to have had about 8,000 people in 1545, is shown in the returns as having 171 alehouses, with 86 inns and eleven taverns. To-day there are 155 publicans' licences for 107,100 people.

The numbers of the Elizabethan alehouses are not necessarily complete, for the sheriffs' returns might not have covered the whole of the counties concerned. Separate returns would or should have been made by other authorities; the Kent return, for instance, did not include Canterbury and the Cinque Ports and their members. The average number of alehouses in each parish is suggested by two counties' returns which went into the subject in particular detail. Derbyshire had roughly four to a parish and Berkshire two. Only three small localities were reported in any of the returns to be devoid of any sort of licensed house. They were Worth, Kent; Remenham, Berkshire, and the Redyngate ward in Canterbury, which was said to be "decayed . . . there is in it neither inn, vintner or [*sic*] alehouse."

The Privy Council apparently never succeeded in securing a complete return. After waiting for three years, they seem to have despaired of replies from all counties and, with the threat of a Spanish invasion looming larger, they made a guess at the total number. They estimated it to be 24,000, reckoning the number of parish churches in England and Wales to be 12,000 and "counting to every parish one with another two victuallers" (which term embraced innkeeper, taverner, vintner, alehouse keeper and "tippler"). The total number of "on" licences to-day is 73,422. There were in Elizabethan times at least three times as many



licensed victuallers in proportion to population as there are to-day.

Another most definite impression made by the returns is that the Elizabethans had a clear conception of the different functions of inns, taverns and alehouses. Occasionally in the returns an innkeeper was described as being also a tavern keeper or vintner, but an alehouse keeper was evidently never any other sort of licensed victualler, although sometimes described as a "tipling-house keeper" or "tipler." Clearly the inn was the Elizabethan's hotel; it provided food and lodging as well as liquor. The tavern, broadly speaking, was his licensed restaurant; unlike the inn, apparently, in not giving lodging as a matter of course, and unlike the alehouse in selling wine as well as ale and beer. The alehouse, for all that it might provide a meal and a shake-down for the wayfarer, was the Elizabethan's "pub."

We know from other sources how the Elizabethan alehouse compared with the "pub" of to-day. It had its bench, in summer probably placed outside the house. It may have had its bar, the "ale stond," although this is more likely to have been a booth or stall. Only in the "pub" does a tendency for Englishmen collectively to burst into song, so characteristic of the Elizabethan, seem to have survived. Nor is it to be assumed that the quality of the singing has deteriorated. Shakespeare makes Malvolio ask: "Do you make an alehouse of my lady's house, that ye squeak out your cozier's catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice?"

The beer ordinarily served in the Elizabethan alehouse was very much the same in point of strength as that drunk to-day. City of London brewers were enjoined by the authorities to draw 153 gallons of "double" beer from a quarter of malt. As much

"single" beer, half as strong, had to be brewed for the benefit of poorer folk. On average, therefore, the Elizabethan brewer drew 204 gallons from a quarter of malt, which quantity would yield very slightly more beer at its average strength to-day, when, it is reasonable to suppose, the malt is of better quality.

The point that the "pub" of to-day is to be identified with the Elizabethan alehouse would be less worth mentioning if it were not that recent orations in the House of Commons have disclosed a grievous confusion about the traditional function of the "pub." After listening to some of the speakers, one might be forgiven for suspecting that their knowledge of the "pub's" history was derived mainly from misreading Dickens and studying Christmas cards—the sort that show coach travellers being haled off their frozen perches by Boniface to Pickwickian repasts. One could deduce from the speeches that once upon a time all "pubs" were inns, and pretty nearly all of them coaching inns, and that the bounteous hospitality they gave was shattered only when the wicked brewer bought them, silenced the groans of the sideboard by banishing its load of rounds of beef and giant hams, plumped the pretty chambermaid behind the bar counter and bound poor Boniface hand and foot with an infamous "tying" agreement. The brewer—so ran the theme—turned ye jollye olde inne into a drinking shop.

This, of course, is unmitigated nonsense, and the returns provide another link in the chain of evidence to show that it is so. Not only were alehouses clearly, if inferentially, defined as such, and separated from inns and taverns; they are also shown to be, many of them, humble places. The Rutland return stated that the alehouses were "for the most part very poor" and from Norfolk it was reported: "But truly in our opinions there are not in



## FOUR CENTURIES OF THE ALEHOUSE

any shire in England generally so poor people exercising that trade as are in this country, for they are commonly the poorest in every parish, for others of any wealth will not deal therein but mostly follow the trade of husbandry." Many alehouses were kept by widows.

The "pub" in fact has a separate origin from that of the inn and tavern. It was the Saxon alehouse which King Edgar, under Dunstan's guidance, allowed one to each parish, and it was probably the *gildhus* (a mistranscription possibly for *ealahus* or the then current euphemism for "pub") described in Henry II's reign as the "drinking place" which the English had in every village. From Elizabethan times onward, the references in literature and legislation suggest that for centuries there was no change in the concept of the "pub's" rôle. Even the temperance reformers of the nineteenth century generally demanded no change of this sort—what they wanted was not development, but a massacre of "pubs" or, failing that, dismemberment. The view that the "pub" can do other things than serve beer has grown up largely within the past fifty years. Some may claim that the view was not first propagated by the brewing industry,

but the first "improved pubs" seem to have been built by brewery companies, and it is undeniable that the view has become accepted and implemented only since most licensed houses came under brewer-ownership. It is precisely since the brewer became partner with the retailer in running the alehouse that it has grown so much nearer to the inn and tavern in status, amenities and service.

What we all know as the "pub" took root in this country at least a thousand years ago and is a far more exclusively English institution than either the inn or the tavern. It can have survived periods of severe oppression (not always unjustified) without changing its essential character, only because it responds to some very strong and abiding social, dietetic or psychological need, or a combination of the three. Its value to society can unquestionably be further strengthened and new uses found for it. But the habit of a thousand years is not changed by a teapot on the bar counter. The alehouse could not be cut off from its roots without some substitute growth, probably less desirable, springing up in its place.

C. L. SHAW.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO

IN February, 1903, *The National Review* published an article by the great Professor of English literature, Sir Walter Raleigh, "Concerning Gambling." This he claimed to be "a natural form of human activity" and he argued that it was useless to try and distinguish between different kinds of gambling "according to the incidence of loss or gain."

... A man is very seldom in a position where he can truly say that his gain or his loss affects no one but himself. A voluntary soldier, it may be said, risks his life for the good of his country; the loss falls on himself, the gain comes to others. But this is inaccurate; the loss falls heavily on the living, and as for the gain, he shares that too with his country. The ultimate disposition of gambling does not affect the nature of the trans-

action itself : a winner at Monte Carlo may conceivably spend his winnings with exemplary generosity and wisdom, while another man is squandering laborious earnings in every kind of vicious extravagance.

So, too, with another irrelevant consideration—if a man gambles with money that is not his own, he is guilty, not of improvidence, but of theft. Gambling, it may be said, leads to theft ; but so does hunger ; and, for that matter, I know of no passion more likely to lead to theft than the love of old books. . . .

Having deployed these arguments, and a few others, in support of gambling, Sir Walter turns with relish upon the spoil-sports.

I notice that Mr. Carnegie, in his recent Rectorial Address at St. Andrews, expresses a strong condemnation of gambling. I have tried to understand his point of view, and I do not know that I have succeeded. It cannot be said that he objects to risks incurred for the sake of gain ; no one can become a multi-millionaire (like Mr. Carnegie himself) by the sweet pathway of absolute security. Perhaps long habit has led him to regard the human race chiefly as employees, and a pawn that executes manoeuvres on its own account interferes with the prospects of success in the game where it is merely a mechanical unit. Mr. Carnegie wants good pawns for a game involving larger stakes. The virtues that he selects to insist on specially are the virtues of the employee . . . The cobbler is to stick to his last, the mill-hand, the stoker, the navy, the collier, are each of them to devote his whole energies to the repetition for the millionth time of the same exercise. No one is to smoke, or to drink alcohol, or to gamble, lest it should impair his

efficiency. The community is to consist of industrious ascetics. Such communities have existed in times past, and do to-day exist—in the service of religion. But there is another community, like enough to these in outward appearance, with industry and asceticism for its regulating principles, inhabiting his Majesty's prisons. Which type of community is aimed at by our repressive reformers ? Is their gospel of Work anything but a gospel of Hard Labour ? Here, in modern cities, are many lives lived in a continuous grinding monotony, like the tramp of prisoners round a yard. The prison is imperfectly constructed, and now and again the prisoners catch glimpses, through gaps in the wall, of the great world of romance. . . .

And the article ends with a passage of fervid eloquence :—

. . . Dislike, disapproval, righteous wrath, moral indignation, are useful scavengers, not architects. The architectural assets of a society are the pleasant and comely things which it has created. The saviours of society are those men and women who hand on the torch, who keep aloft the standard, who are full of sympathy for the zest and joy of life wherever it appears, who encourage youth to brave adventure, and who, when they find in their fellows a spirit that makes light of risk, recognise it for the very soul of romance, the essence of chivalry, and, instead of wasting their curses on its misdirections and misapplications, open out new ways, and teach it to spend itself not in vain.

In recent years the desire for security has often seemed stronger in Britain than the spirit of adventure. Sir Walter's peroration—and even his somewhat specious defence of gambling—is still very much to the point.

# BOOKS NEW AND OLD

## SIMPLE SUBTLETY\*

By ERIC GILLETT

WHEN the President of the Royal Academy was commenting recently on the superb drawings of Sir Frank Brangwyn he remarked that they possessed qualities which would endear them not only to the art critics with the loftiest brows but also to any unthinking child. Truly great artists working in any medium can do this. There is no merit in obscurity. Henry James managed to make the art of the novelist appear supremely difficult. He made very severe demands upon the reader's attention. Almost all contemporary composers make even heavier demands upon the ears and harmonic sense of their audiences. In his plays Mr. T. S. Eliot is always in the very best sense of the word, suggestive, but he leaves the impression that many of his critics and interpreters are much more certain of what he means to say than he is himself.

Now, this prevalent vagueness of intention is a bad thing. It is as though creative artists, mistrustful of their natural abilities, seek to draw a semi-opaque veil between themselves and their patrons, or, to use the unpleasant journalistic term, their "customers." Mercifully there have been shining exceptions to the widespread gloom and confusion. Among the younger writers, Sydney Keyes, George Orwell, and Mr. Graham Greene have made their intentions abundantly clear. Words have been their servants and not their masters. True artists in all media, through the ages, live by creations which have been fashioned after this pattern.

Their individual vision, their powers of expression are stamped upon their work. If these qualities are remarkable, memorable, and of lasting and widespread appeal, the work endures. They become "classics."

It is rash for a critic to prophesy a lasting fame for any writer within a year or so of his death, but I think that there will be a small niche for some of the work of George Orwell. The Cobbett-like elements in his prose, his approach to his themes, as in *Animal Farm*, 1984, and *Coming Up for Air*, should make his work of interest to future generations. He was a born writer. He suffered and his writings sprang from his genius and his pain. I believe that there is a "timeless" quality in his prose. It belongs to no period, but his vision of life enabled him to comment valuably on the present as he knew it, and on the future as he envisaged it. He had experienced human affairs in many different spheres, as a boy at Eton, as a member of the Burmese Police, as a waiter, and as a down-and-out in Paris and London. He knew what he was doing when he named one of his autobiographical pieces *The Road to Wigan Pier*, and another *Down and Out in Paris and London*.

When another writer of the past decade, Maurice Denton Welch, published his first novel, *Maiden Voyage*, in 1943, one of the most able and honest contemporary writers, Dr. Edith

\* *The Denton Welch Journals*. Edited and with an Introduction by Jocelyn Brooke. Hamish Hamilton. 15s.

Sitwell, honoured the book with a preface. "He uses words as only a born writer uses them," she said. "He never fumbles. . . ." On reading this acutely sensitive and obviously autobiographical novel I agreed with Dr. Sitwell. I read each of Welch's succeeding books as they appeared. I was conscious of a sharp sense of almost personal loss when he died on December 30th, 1948. Since then two more works, a novel and a miscellaneous collection of prose, verse, and reproductions of his paintings have been published, and now Mr. Jocelyn Brooke has edited *The Denton Welch Journals*, with a most able Introduction.

Denton Welch was born at Shanghai on March 29th, 1915. He was the youngest of three brothers, the son of a well-to-do company director and a lady from New England, who was a Christian Scientist. He went to a preparatory school at Uckfield, and afterwards to Repton, whence he ran away at the age of sixteen. He returned for the rest of the term, and then, as he was clearly unfitted for public school life, he was sent to the Goldsmith School of Art at New Cross to study painting. It was this period of his life which he described in detail in *Maiden Voyage*. He was there for four years, and it was in June 1935, when bicycling to visit relations, that a woman motorist collided with him. His spine was permanently injured. All kinds of complications set in and he remained a semi-invalid for the last thirteen years of his life, which terminated in a period of the greatest suffering, although he insisted on working on his unfinished novel, *A Voice Through A Cloud*, like a true artist, as long as he possibly could. His friend and companion, Mr. Eric Oliver, writes of this period:

Then his condition became too grave for even him to continue physical

activity, and in the last few months of his life he was being given morphia to alleviate the constant pain. Still he worked on, though the effort to do so gave him a high temperature and he would have to lie on his bed blindfolded without moving. Towards the end he could only work for three or four minutes at a time and then he would get a raging headache and his eyes would more or less give out. Complication after complication set in, and the left side of his heart started failing. Even then, he made colossal and nearly successful attempts to finish the book.

It is impossible to understand Welch's approach to life, his frequently acid and waspish comments on people, especially women, without knowing these biographical facts. They explain, too, his obsession with strength and fitness, so cruelly snatched away from him. *A Voice Through A Cloud* is the most haunting account of physical and mental suffering that I have ever read. An author who was physically fit could not have written it. It is extraordinary that such a story, so lucid, so beautifully and memorably phrased, was written under the terrible conditions described by Mr. Oliver. Welch fought physically and mentally to put into words the full horror of the experiences he had endured. He did not live to finish his task, but his artistic success was complete. Through pain he had come to a supreme expression of his powers, and in the novel he comments on this when he is writing about his experiences at an art school, where he felt, every night, that he had done little or nothing to justify his existence:

There was sadness, too, in coming to this point in the day, for it brought with it the realization that another precious piece of my life had melted away; and I had done nothing to catch it, to hold it, to know it.

A wave of shame and guilt at my own indolence would flood over me. I felt

## SIMPLE SUBTLETY

that somewhere inside me was so much power—if only I could dig a channel down which it could pour.

He had, in fact, done enough for glory, and perhaps he knew it. Mr. Brooke notes that Welch "longed greedily for fame, and a letter of praise from some eminent fellow-writer could keep him in transports of joy for days at a time." Mr. Brooke is right in saying that there are points of similarity between Proust and Welch. Neither could be called "normal" people, and both had certainly elements of genius in them, but I doubt whether the comment made by Miss Sinclair, Welch's housekeeper, that he was "perpetually drunk without wine," could ever have been made of Proust.

Welch's honesty and detachment in writing about himself are remarkable. Some publishers found them overwhelming. They were deeply shocked by them. It is easy to understand their attitude, but it is a regrettable one. In an age peculiarly susceptible to vulgarities of every kind, with a popular press devoting columns and columns to sex cases and horrifying murders, the clear, cool voice of an artist able to present a unique personality without fear or favour must be heard.

The careful, sensible editorship of Mr. Brooke has enabled Welch to speak for himself and of himself in the most intimate way, and I do not think that the *Journals* can give offence to any civilized reader.

The original manuscript consisted of nineteen paper-covered exercise books. They were written in bed, or out of doors—in fields, church-yards, sometimes in the church itself. He wrote very fast and almost without errors or corrections. In the published book the manuscript has been cut down to a little over half its length, because of the laws of libel, for fear of causing offence or embarrassment, or because they



DENTON WELCH.

dealt with personal affairs—business transactions, and so forth. Some of the material has been published in the other books. What remains is spontaneous, most readable, and fascinating because it is frank, closely observed, and memorably expressed.

The first entry—there is a possibility that the writer had destroyed earlier journals though this is not considered likely—is dated July 10th, 1942, and it begins in mid-sentence: "And then we all met at Penshurst"; the last, "31 August, Tuesday, 10.7 a.m." (1948) is a detailed and not altogether sympathetic account of a visit to Sissinghurst, the home of Mr. Harold Nicolson and Miss Vita Sackville-West, who were, not unnaturally, so keenly aware of their guest's extreme frailty that they were embarrassed as to how best they might entertain him. However, it came out all right in the end: "Lady Colefax made it (the conversation) bright, quick-moving; Harold and Vita were beginning to feel at home again in their own house; Eric (Oliver) was enjoying his cider, and I felt warmed and protected by the richness of the room. Almost everything stopped short at the seventeenth century. For once it was



refreshing to see nothing from one's own favourite eighteenth and nineteenth. Taste which is not one's own is a sort of holiday. One criticizes but enjoys. I wished I could be left alone to look about me."

He was always looking about him, and he often noted that he felt it best to live alone. He had many of the qualities of the contemplative and yet, as a writer, good as he is at describing things seen and emotions recollected, he excels at describing meetings and encounters. It was his memorable account of a meeting with Sickert, first published in the lamented *Horizon*, that first brought him into notice as a writer, and aroused Dr. Sitwell's interest in him. The *Journals* have a vivid impression of their first meeting. It was almost too much for the young man:

Then the tall figure dressed all in black, black trilby, Spanish witch's hat, black cloak, black satin dress to the ankles and two huge aquamarine rings. Wonderful rings on powder-white hands, and face so powder-pearly, nacreous white, almost not to be believed in, with the pinkened mouth, the thin, delicate, swordlike nose and tender-curling nostrils. No hair, I can remember, no hair at first. The rings, the glistening satin, and the kid-white skin."

No critic would claim for Denton Welch the status of a great genius. He worked in miniature. He recorded things well within his own experience. He delighted in simple, quiet things, picnics, rather chi-chi ornaments and decorations, motor drives to country places, sitting thinking, sometimes writing, in little churches. He enjoyed, too, once in a while, meetings with hearties in the local. He liked writing his curious verses, though he does not seem to have set much importance on them. I think he must have been happier about his pictures, some of them reproduced in *A Last Sheaf*. I have

seen only one of them, *The Coffin House*, hanging on a wall with pictures by more considerable artists, and yet it is Welch's, with its rich deep colours, its strange little battlemented building standing in the angle between country lanes, that catches the eye, with two very Welch rabbits in the foreground. The vision in this and in his other paintings is his own. No one else could have painted them. I have no pretensions to be an art critic, but I know that *The Coffin House* lingers in the memory and haunts it as few others have ever done.

Somewhere in the *Journals* Welch says that he watched an incident "carefully until I had remembered the sight." He must have been doing that all his life, as most artists do, I imagine. It was invaluable to him as a writer. Just as, in another way noticed by Mr. Brooke, his accident probably turned him into a writer who was able to recreate in fantasy all the ambitions which in real life would probably never have been fulfilled. He was looked after and cossetted as an invalid. The artist in him made it essential that he should discover some kind of substitute for active life, and he found it in his writings.

Very few authors of consequence have talked or written much about difficulties of composition, and it is worth noting that even in the last years of his life when Welch was working desperately against time to finish *A Voice Through A Cloud* he has little or nothing to say about the efforts he was making in the *Journals*.

A most interesting writer, a strange and slightly precious personality, Welch's writings are his small monument to great artistic perception and to almost phenomenal courage. There are many people who will dislike his work intensely, but I believe that they will read it.

ERIC GILLET.

# UNWORTHY APOLOGIA \*

By LORD GEDDES

IT is difficult to understand why friends of Douglas Haig published this book. It is mainly composed of extracts from what was in form, a very intimate and personal diary regularly written up during the years of the First World War, yet intended for publication some day. Many of the important men and episodes mentioned were known to me personally, but I do not recognize the picture presented, and this, though it is clear that Mr. Blake has selected his extracts fairly.

It is a fact that Douglas Haig as Commander-in-Chief won the greatest military victory in our annals; it is also a fact that he was upheld by a Government resolved on victory. What this book fails to recognize is that the First World War caught the British Army in a state of transition. Apart from Haig, few senior officers had made the transit from the red little, dead little Army of their youth with the Duke of Cambridge as its Commander-in-Chief, to the nation in arms, fighting for its life by sea, land and air. Haig himself is the best example of the "officer and gentleman" of the pre-Boer War rum little army being transformed into the fighting modern soldier of 1918 and to understand this book, the reader must appreciate Haig's background.

At the core of Haig's being there was a sense of the existence of powers opposing him. He had a persecution diathesis, not a persecution mania but always suspicious that someone was plotting against him. The origin of this dates from Edinburgh in the 1850's and '60's. John Haig, father of Douglas, a wealthy distiller, established himself in 24 Charlotte Square, the heart of

Edinburgh's West End. In those days Edinburgh was very 'East-Windy and West-Endy' and the West-Endiness of the Edinburgh neighbours of the whisky Haigs was not appeased by any suggestion that some 250 years before, these Haigs had sprung from the ancient line of Bemersyde. To them he was just a whisky tradesman. In consequence Douglas Haig was not educated at a Scottish school and even when, in 1885 he passed first out of Sandhurst and became a Cavalryman, he was not posted to the Scots Greys, the regiment of regiments for a Haig of Bemersyde.

Next to be noted comes Haig's keen appreciation of the possibilities of exploiting social and especially Court influence. His sister Henrietta, born over a century ago, was married to William Jameson, another wealthy distiller. She, in the '90's, was in London in the Prince of Wales's set; thus helpful influence could easily be brought to bear at the Horse Guards where the old Duke of Cambridge determined the fates of all officers.

In reading the Diary, these two facts have to be remembered. Nearly all the senior officers of 1914 suspected that malign beings, usually described as politicians, were working against them individually and that benign influences could radiate from the Court without which they would be lost. The persistence of these beliefs and the intrigues they engendered suggests that part of Douglas Haig remained not quite adult, as does another of the strangely juvenile habits displayed in the Diary. In the pre-Boer War Army

\* *The Private Papers of Douglas Haig, 1914-1919.* Edited by Robert Blake. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 25s.

most of the regimental officers retained an almost schoolboyish way of talking about the officers of other units. No real criticism was implied when the other fellows were called cads and bounders, rotters or stinkers. It only meant that in the ferociously tribal army of the 1890's they belonged to a different tribe. It would all have been quite normal in any lower fourth and was part of the persistent adolescence characteristic of many regimental messes. So, when in the Diary Haig lets fly at the French, the Americans, the Canadians or the Australians, or even at the politicians, it does not mean that he was expressing a considered judgment. It was just a non-adult habit of using exaggerated language. There were many things about the French that were not easy for the British to live with, but there were equally many things about the British that the French found intolerable. I think it a pity that this juvenility in the use of words, definitely one of Haig's faults, has received wide publicity.

Another thing about Haig made great difficulty for those concerned with the distribution of available manpower. He had no real sense of numbers. He failed to get into the Staff College because he could not pass his mathematics, but later, fortunately for the British Empire, was jobbed into it by Royal influence. In my experience Douglas Haig's vagueness about the meaning of numbers was prolific in misunderstanding. In fact, his wild suggestion that the British Government was holding back reinforcements in the early months of 1918 had as its sole foundation a mental confusion between unit and total establishments. Propaganda arising from this pictured the British Armies in France as melting away. Some units were short of personnel, but this was due to the enormous increase in, for example, the Artillery

and the Transport and Supply Services; in other words, to a change in the shape of the military formations made by the General Staff. It fell to me early in 1918 to counter the soldiers' propaganda in Parliament. In doing this there was no difficulty, for the Army's own figures showed that the Forces in the field were numerically stronger in December 1916 than they were in 1915 and stronger again in December 1917 than they were in 1916. An odd reflection is that Haig was for a time, against the development of tanks because they would require men to man them who could otherwise have been posted to the Infantry.

The strictly soldier part of Haig was transformed by his experience in South Africa where he was chief Staff Officer to John French, Commanding Cavalry in Natal at the outbreak of the Boer War. This was the most important experience in Haig's development but it is doubtful if it would have been sufficient to make him the soldier he became if he had not been educated by R. B. Haldane, who, as Secretary of State for War, drove through, largely with Haig as his military assistant, the reforms which gave us a Six Divisional Expeditionary Force and a Fourteen Divisional Territorial Force. Haldane and Haig liked and trusted one another and it was Haldane who moulded Haig into the General of the British Army's transition. Those who knew his work recognized that in spite of his limitations we had no other General to compare with him as a possible Commander-in-Chief.

Unfortunately, Haig never completed the transition. He never quite realized that the two, the Army and the Nation, had become one—the Armed Nation. It was failure to grasp the fact that there is a strategy beyond military strategy that prevented Haig from realizing the damage he was doing to the Nation's

## THE DECLINE OF PERSONAL MONARCHY

future by his persistence in the awful slaughter of the Somme and Passchendaele offensives. In the official history it is written: "Never before had the ranks of a British Army on the field of battle contained the finest of all classes of the Nation in physique, brains and education." These were the men who themselves or through their sons and grandsons, should have provided leaders among our people for the next century, but childless they died. They were our best and Haig drove them to their deaths in pursuance of military strategy. There was something about Haig without parallel among British Generals. He had a persistence that was remorseless and ruthless and it sprang from inside himself. Explanations he gave in later days of why he persisted in these attacks are not supported by the Diary and it is interesting that his son, who was a child when his father died, records his father's persistence in battering down the snow while making him a snow man. But, make no mistake, it was this same quality of persistence that in 1918 enabled Haig to gain the greatest victory ever won by a British Army.

In the self-portrait painted by Haig in the Diary he has done himself gross injustice. The Haig I knew was a bigger man and at all times a gallant gentleman.

GEDDES.

### THE DECLINE OF PERSONAL MONARCHY

GEORGE III AND THE POLITICIANS. By Richard Pares. *Oxford: Clarendon Press.* 21s.

A GREAT potter has been made of late years by the historians about the interpretation of the reign of George III. And indeed it always has been a controversial subject. The Whig historians, by being much better writers than the Tories, succeeded in imposing their version of the events and issues of that reign on the

public mind. But, of course, theirs was a very prejudiced view of it all, deriving—sometimes by direct family descent—from the Whig Opposition, from the earlier Burke and Charles James Fox. Sir Lewis Namier, throwing his heavy weight on the other side, has inclined the balance, perhaps a little too much, the other way. Now comes Professor Pares—essentially a disciple, but with the advantage of an English background and judgment—who gets the thing right for us, once and for all: "for I am exactly the right height," he may say with Queen Elizabeth I.

The theme is an important one: it is no less than the change-over from the personal leadership of the monarch in government to that of an accredited party leader with a majority in the Commons. The transition—it is impossible to avoid the hated word—took place some time between George III and George IV. Personal factors entered into it—the failing powers of the very active-minded George III and his ultimate madness, the weakness and unpopularity of George IV. But underlying factors were more important—such as the increasing cohesiveness of the Cabinet: at some time in George III's reign the Cabinet formed the habit of considering matters without any reference from the King. Professor Pares regards this change as "perhaps the most important in the history of the institution." Still more important was the consolidation of the two-party system, which left the Crown little more actual political power than to register the results of elections; the emergence of the public and public opinion, with the growth of newspapers and communications, upon the scene. The conditions of political life were changing, and George III's long reign may be said to have witnessed the essential change, though it was not complete until the time of Gladstone and Disraeli. "It was the modern party system, above all, that destroyed the more personal conception of constitutional monarchy and reduced it (though not so quickly as Bagehot supposed) to the role of 'encouraging, advising, and warning.'"

Professor Pares' book consists of the

Ford Lectures at Oxford, which—with perhaps an excess of loyalty—he regards as the highest honour an English historian can receive. They were certainly the most brilliant series of Ford Lectures that I have ever heard. In print, with additional material and illustrations, they are not less so: they exemplify perfection of scholarship, a brilliance of phrase along with a perceptive but strongly common-sense judgment: the product of a judicious and sparkling mind.

A. L. ROWSE.

### AN INDIVIDUALIST LOOKS AT HIS WORLD

THE STATE THE ENEMY. By Sir Ernest Benn. *Ernest Benn, Ltd.* 12s. 6d.

SIR ERNEST BENN, like Rousseau, holds that man was born free, but that he is everywhere in chains, and the theory is driven home on every page of this book. In one respect the publication of it is ill-timed, for it largely relates to the state of affairs existing before Mr. Churchill's present administration took office, and, as the author himself admits, the chapter concerning Housing is out of date. Indeed, it is at times difficult to resist the conclusion that Sir Ernest would have done better to have re-written the volume in the light of recent events before presenting it to the public.

The author's views on the subject of which he treats in this book are well known, and the passage of time has clearly not caused him to modify any of them. What is often lacking is an appreciation of the basic causes of the evils which he condemns, particularly the extravagance of recent administrations. This was inevitable from the moment that representative government was abandoned in favour of democracy. All régimes are under a temptation to spend public money on their immediate supporters—a monarchy on those who attend the Court, an oligarchy on its relatives, and a democracy on the mob. Of the three a democracy is the most extravagant because its clients are the most numerous. Only under a repre-

sentative system are there checks and balances which counteract this very human tendency.

Then, again, in many instances Sir Ernest's historical perspective is too limited. It is perfectly true that in his youth most of the restrictions to which the modern Englishman is subject were unknown, but the Victorian age was exceptional, not typical, in this respect as in many others. To go no further back than Tudor and Stuart times, the liberty of the Englishman was severely curtailed, in many instances along the same lines as it is to-day. What rendered these restrictions less irksome was the fact that owing to the badness of contemporary communications they were not easily enforced. This does not, needless to say, affect the author's argument that such restrictions are evil in themselves, but it is well to remember that they are not the innovation he would have his readers suppose.

On the other hand few of us are likely to disagree with Sir Ernest's contention that bureaucracy is becoming too powerful; what is not so easy is to say what should be done about it. Owing to the narrow governmental majorities of the past few years Ministers are tied to the Treasury Bench when they would be much better employed in supervising their Departments; less venial still is their habit of absenting themselves from the country to attend international conferences which usually effect nothing. The result is to place more and more power in the hands of the Civil Servant: decisions have to be taken, and he is usually the only person on the spot, so he has to take them.

To this the author would reply that the proper solution is to reduce drastically the amount of State interference in the private life of the ordinary citizen, and here he is on extremely sound ground. The difficulty is that we are living in a revolutionary age, which the Victorian era—to which he would have us return—was not, and all history goes to show that in a revolutionary age the liberty of the individual tends to be seriously curtailed.

One weakness of the modern English politician certainly is that he is sublimely



## CONTENTED POET

ignorant of the bad example he is setting to those upon whom his country's prosperity depends. As Sir Ernest so aptly observes:

The Mother of Parliaments, thinking to make a harmless sop to Socialism, declared that if oil should be found below the surface of this island it belonged to the State. The result of that decree was not only to arrest the development of any oil that might be here; Mexico, rightly regarding us as the leaders in all matters of government, promptly followed our Parliamentary example and stole millions of British and American property invested in good faith to develop Mexican oil. Persia came a good deal later.

No wonder "some of these people base their thieving firmly and squarely upon our doings."

In fine, Sir Ernest has, as is his wont, written a book which is at once highly provocative, at times extremely irritating, but always definitely stimulating: readers of it may become very angry or very enthusiastic, but they will assuredly never become bored.

CHARLES PETRIE.

## CONTENTED POET

THE POETICAL WORKS OF ROBERT BRIDGES.

*Geoffrey Cumberlege. Oxford University Press. 12s. 6d.*

TO the younger generation of poetry readers Robert Bridges is almost unknown. Lost in the temperate acres of Georgian poetry his anthology pieces do not tempt the reader brought up on Yeats and Eliot to enquire further. How much is such a reader missing? It is very difficult to know, and even this new Oxford Edition which includes the whole corpus of Bridges's poetry except for the poetic plays, makes the problem of criticism no easier. For the gap in time and outlook between ourselves and Bridges, though wide, is not yet absolute. Though he seems in some ways as distant as a poet of the old Chinese Empire, his good fortune, and an attitude to life which seems based upon it, is still capable of arousing envy and impatience in some breasts to-day.

We have changed all that, and we are still too close for critical sympathy. And so if we find nothing in Bridges to admire it would be as well to let the matter rest without comment, and to remember that our own criterion of excellence in poetry is as insecure as our predecessors'. We demand things in poetry which Bridges cannot give us, but in demanding them we may show limitations as great, though of a different kind, as those we find in him. We assume that poetry should contain evidence of conflict and suffering, either forced upon the poet from without or the product of some struggle within. Neither kind exists in Bridges's poetry. He seems to have felt nothing comparable to the shock of pity and horror which made Wilfred Owen exclaim: "Tennyson was a great child—so should I have been but for Beaumont Hamel." Nor did he write of that recurrent anguish of mind, those

cliffs of fall

Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed.

which makes the poetry of his friend Hopkins so sympathetic to the reader to-day. In contemporary writing the exploration of suffering is a passport so automatically acceptable as to run the risk of triviality, and in readers who have not necessarily experienced these pains themselves the demand that the artist should be preoccupied with them can be as unheroic as an insurance policy. There is, too, the complacent hint that we are stern creatures who look the facts in the face and have no time for poetry written by the "great children" of a golden age.

Moreover we prefer poetry not to have formal manners, to be familiar and colloquial rather than courtly and dignified, and Bridges is the most well-mannered and reserved of poets. Reversing Rimbaud's poetic principle he believed, if one may put it so, in *Le règlement de tous les sens*. One feels that he might well have enquired of Rimbaud, as he once enquired about a distinguished French author who was visiting Oxford: "Is he a dirty fellow? Because if so I shan't see him."

It is his gentlemanliness that makes Bridges so little at home in our rather ungentlemanly poetic world. Not that he was in the least stuffy or Victorian in the obvious sense—indeed when we compare him with such haunted Victorian figures as Arnold and Leslie Stephen he seems more like an eighteenth century *Grand Seigneur*, interested in everything, able to explain things, and quite confident about the desirability of his own position and existence? How does he react to some of modern poetry's problems? Was slang the question?—he was prepared to use it. When H. A. L. Fisher remarked of some modern poem that *cab* and *tram* were low, mean words, unsuited for poetry, Bridges gave judgment thus: "*Cab*, certainly a bad word, but *tram* no! A beautiful word!" Was it sex? He had written down what he thought about it. "I've just settled sex," he remarked to a friend with great satisfaction, when he was at work on *The Testament of Beauty*, "I've explained the whole problem." Freudian eyebrows might be raised, and indeed it is possible to read Books 2 and 3 of the *Testament* without becoming aware that the problem is under discussion. But if we are honest it is impossible not to be taken aback and filled with admiration by the fine simplicity and confidence with which this great poem is filled. Bridges is perhaps our last poet in whom acceptance and explanation are the same. He is not haunted because he sees no reason to be: his poetry returns to another age which affirmed itself serenely, in the great periods of *Paradise Lost* and in the delicacy of Campion's songs.

Though his self-dedication to poetry involved no visible sacrifice it was as complete as that of any Bohemian. He took up medicine and practised for four years in London hospitals, (there is an interesting *Account of the Casualty Ward at St. Bartholomew's* among his essays), with the deliberate idea of increasing his experience as a poet, but unlike Henley and Hardy he seems not to have been able to use such direct experience. Though Bridges was sensitive to physical suffering one cannot but feel that the lines *On a*

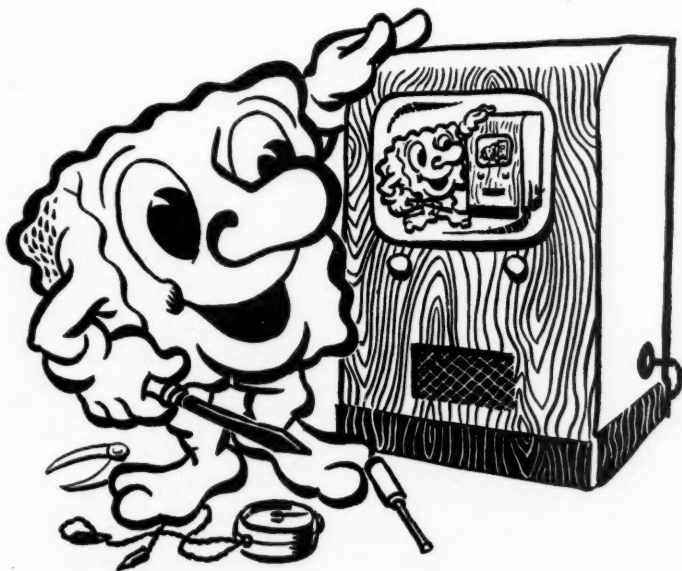
*Dead Child* exist chiefly to explore a highly effective type of rhythm; compared with Hardy's "unborn pauper child" or Hopkins's *Felix Randal* (which in point of metre owes much to Bridges), the poem is not at home with what it tries to communicate. The other two poets appeal far more to our Romantic conditioning, and I suspect that Bridges was never really at home in the Romantic form that draws its material straight from the incidents of daily life and the poet's response to them. He could not in a short space undergo an experience, transmute it into poetry, and form a conclusion. His best short poems are his most formal, his *Masques*, *Elegies* and *Rondeaus*.

Cloke her in ermine, for the night is cold,  
And wrap her warmly, for the night is long.  
In pious hands the flaming torches hold,  
While her attendants, chosen from among  
Her faithful virgin throng,  
May lay her in her cedar litter,  
Decking her coverlet with sprigs of gold,  
Roses, and lilies white that best befit her.

That is from the *Elegy on a Lady whom Grief for the Death of her Betrothed Killed*, and the quaint formality of the title, the tranquil and disciplined form, show where Bridges is most at home. His mode of feeling is not romantic: he prefers, as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries usually preferred, to let the recognized form control the mood of the poem, with the result that it is much more moving than the lines on the dead child. An *Elegy* is sad, an *Epithalamion* is joyful, and there—very properly for a classical poet—is the end of the matter. He does not try to add a personal insight into suffering or joy. The poet's own personality is unimportant, and Bridges, as his friends often remarked, was quite uninterested in himself. The romantic side of him that is communicable is his love of English country, and here he is the poet of high summer: even the famous *London Snow* seems to have a June warmth and luxuriance.

The critical epithets that are showered on Bridges's poetry—flawless, pellucid, technically superb, etc.—seem to me to do him no service. If he survives it will not

*John Baird invented  
television in 1925*



*"My views on home-service  
get much the best reception  
in every household"*

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be because he knew how words and metre should be used—other more vigorous and more original poets of his time also knew—but as one of the few poets who have written a long poem on an abstract subject that remains poetry almost throughout. T. S. Eliot in his *Four Quartets* is almost the only other successful modern exponent of this most difficult of all poetic undertakings, and the *Testament* is much longer than the *Quartets*. Its "loose Alexandrines" have the true quality of inevitability; we feel that the poet's thought could only develop through the medium of his chosen style. It is the distillation of a long life-time devoted to

Things supreme in themselves, eternal,  
unnumber'd  
in the unexplored necessities of life and  
love.

JOHN BAYLEY.

## Novels

WHO GOES HOME? Maurice Edelman.  
*Wingate*. 10s. 6d.

MIDSUMMER MEADOW. John Moore.  
*Collins*. 10s. 6d.

THE SEEDS OF TIME. Irene Rathbone.  
*Faber*. 15s.

THE ROCK. E. M. Almedingen. *Hutchinson*. 12s. 6d.

MR. MAURICE EDELMAN'S *Who Goes Home?* is an immensely readable novel about present-day political life. Its central figure is a young Minister who was a little careless about the company he kept while on a political mission to America. The purpose of this mission was to cement a degree of economic co-operation between the two countries which the Opposition thought dangerous. Erskine's indiscretion plays straight into the hands of his private enemies as well as those of his political opponents; the maximum of

publicity is secured by an unscrupulous journalist and a select Committee of the House is appointed to enquire into Erskine's conduct. The handling of this enquiry is brilliantly done, with all the tension of a first-class criminal trial. There is very little, naturally, that the Hon. Member for Coventry North does not know about the climate of the House of Commons and he makes the very best use of it. The House of Commons is, in fact, the leading character of the book and easily the most successful. Outside this *mise en scène* the people and their problems seemed to me rather theatrical. There is John Vaughan, the self-questioning son of a former Welsh wizard of democracy, who contracts out of politics because he cannot rid himself of his father's shadow; there is his wife Helen who, in her disappointment with him, looks elsewhere, anywhere, for stimulus; there is Erskine's very nice wife, who would not, I feel, have chosen the way out provided for her by Mr. Edelman. But a wholly successful character is that old-time radical, George Morgan, Leader of the Opposition. Lord Huberton, the millionaire peer with his priceless art collection, who has no affections except for his Boxer dog and who pursues malice beyond the bounds of decency, is a rich slice of ham, but I never mind ham in its place. There will probably be many who will affect to see disguised or synthetic portraits in most of these people and the book, in addition to being most entertaining reading, will probably provide a certain amount of agreeable after-dinner speculation. *Who Goes Home?* is a thoroughly good Book Society Choice.

Nothing else in this batch of reading proved as stimulating or as accomplished as Mr. Edelman's book, although two of the remaining novels are by highly esteemed professionals and the third is by a respected and experienced public figure. Both Mr. Moore's book and Miss Rathbone's are motivated by the writers' opinions, and it is not possible to consider either of them without regard to these opinions. Since I share most of Mr. Moore's prejudices and reject most of Miss

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Rathbone's, it is difficult for me to be dispassionate. Mr. Moore, of course, is anyway the more practised as a novelist and for that reason alone he makes a better job of it. We all know him as the chronicler of one of the most delectable parts of England and, fortunately, he has not strayed far from Elmbury and Brensham in *Midsummer Meadow*. In Dr. Tidmarsh, the retired medical practitioner in his Norfolk jacket, with its pockets bulging with "specimens," his love for unsuccessful oddities of humanity and his hatred of that encroaching monster, the modern State, he has drawn, without too much caricature, a type of English eccentric still occasionally to be met. It seems entirely right that Dr. Tidmarsh should purchase (if he had the money which generally he has not) a swampy piece of ground solely in order to preserve a rare but quite unattractive wild flower. It is quite in order, too, that having bought the meadow, Dr. Tidmarsh could never refuse its use as a camping site by anybody to whom the modern world seemed to have given a raw deal. He was lucky, of course, to get Mr. Oliver's Mammoth Circus, and outside a book I don't suppose he would, but like the author I had such delight in Mr. Oliver with his passion for monsters, his wife, a seeress of Red Indian ancestry with a taste for gin, Mifanwy, the girl who makes her living by being tipped out of bed for sixpence by yokels at fairs, that I did not mind being edged farther away from reality in their company. But the curse of all these books, which begin by assembling a fantastic cast, is that the plot is seldom lively enough to carry them, and this is the case with *Midsummer Meadow*. There is also the ghost of that horrid hag Whimsy, who will poke her nose into the work of most English humorists. We know that poor old Dr. Tidmarsh is going to lose his fight against the Glasgow M.O.H. and his horrid myrmidons, and this lends an encroaching melancholy to a book which is deepened by the introduction of a Welsh white witch and her refugee lover. Less tolerant than Dr. Tidmarsh, I found them out of place in *Midsummer Meadow*, and I got very tired of the now

dated Air Force slang of George and Pam. It is not Mr. Moore's best work, but much of it is so engaging that unless you are very progressively-minded I feel you are bound to enjoy it. If you are progressively-minded you will probably regard it as hitting below the belt.

Miss Irene Rathbone is very progressively-minded, and her novel is set in the 'thirties when the progressively-minded had not begun to have qualms. General Franco's rebellion is still "absolute evil" and a nice woman character falls out of sympathy with her decent husband because he is unsound about this. Communists are still very pleasant people; retired Indian Army majors at village tea parties tell how they had "natives tortured," and when the heroine runs away from her husband to join her lover, everybody is agast because the husband doesn't immediately offer to give her a divorce. I could have taken all this from the writer's standpoint if the heroine had not been one of the biggest ninnies in English fiction since Dora Copperfield. Viola is the grand-daughter of a world-famous archæologist; she has been to a finishing school in Lausanne (not, according to most reports, remarkable as cold storage plants for sexual ignorance), but she marries a man twice her age for no apparent reason without even asking herself whether she can tolerate him physically. When she finds that she cannot, she leaves him and gives further proof of her idiocy by accepting a job in a publisher's office at two pounds ten a week. Apart from this silly wench and the fuss made about her by people who seemed intelligent enough to know better, *Seeds of Time* is effective as a picture of a certain section of the social life of the 'thirties, carefully framed without the postscript written by history. Miss Rathbone writes about it all with unquestionable sincerity.

Miss E. M. Almedingen's *The Rock* is pure fairy tale. It is the story of Christian Strom born on the little Baltic island of Skerren, which he loves passionately and of which his forebears have been lords for generations. It is one of those idyllic communities which go back to the dawn



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## Novels

of the world. There is his beautiful, if somewhat dissatisfied mother, a Sibylline old housekeeper and a penniless orphan cousin who has been brought up with Christian, and with whom we knew he would fall in love. Looming in the background is Christian's mysterious grandfather, a potentate as wealthy and charitable as Rockefeller, who supports the whole ménage at Skerren and who takes Christian unwillingly away from his paradise in order that the boy may learn to take his grandfather's place in the world. The air is heavy with secrets, but when the secrets are revealed they are somewhat naïve. Perhaps there is an allegory, but it is lost in the Hans Andersen atmosphere. Miss Almedingen describes the various places in which the story is set, the island of Skerren, the sad city of Warsaw (about 1913) and the little Italian hill town where Christian learns his grandfather's secret at last in picturesque detail; but the idyll and the drama are both too fragile for the weight with which they are invested.

RUBY MILLAR.

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

THERE have been many books about Oxford, but none more charming in form and content than *Came to Oxford* (Blackwell, 30s.), by Gertrude Bone, illustrated by Muirhead Bone. Casually, intimately, Lady Bone has caught the elusive spirit of the place in her text as surely as her husband interprets it in his enchanting illustrations. They have not attempted to be comprehensive or encyclopædic. Some of us may feel that they are unduly preoccupied by John's and Merton, but that is only the dimmest glimmer of a grouse at a beautifully produced book. Mr. Basil Blackwell has lavished upon it all the refinements of resourceful publication. It is only right that there should be a glimpse of him as he stands on the staircase of his famous

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

bookshop. "Blackwell's" has been a godsend to generations of dons and undergraduates. Their debt has been increased by the issue of this delightful record.

\* \* \*

*The Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers* (Richards Press, 12s. 6d.) was so lively and informative that it deserved a judicious reprint to-day. The Rev. Alexander Dyce made a good Boswell to the poetic banker, and now Mr. Morchard Bishop has re-selected and edited part of the material with a judicious introduction. There are many anecdotes of literary celebrities. I like, also, the tale of the young lady who got a bad fright when in her carriage on the way to London. A new form of trans-

port had just been introduced, and when her footman, thinking she might like to see it, announced, "Ma'am, the omnibus!" she was instantly seized with the vapours, fearing it might be a wild beast escaped from the Zoo.

\* \* \*

For years Glasgow, like Wigan, has been a rich mine for music hall comedians. Mr. Colm Brogan lived and worked there for years, and the fruit of his varied experiences will be found in *The Glasgow Story* (Muller, 15s.). It is a fair, provocative, well written, salty book. There are some cheerful decorations by Keir.

\* \* \*

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## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

A reprint, with biographical additions of Mr. H. M. Tomlinson's valuable *Norman Douglas* (Hutchinson, 7s. 6d.), coincides with the publication of what may be the last work from the pen of that curious, debonair and scholarly author. This is *Venus in the Kitchen or Love's Cookery Book* (Heinemann, 12s. 6d.), and it is full of succulent, peculiar, and youth-restoring recipes. There is a pleasant introduction by Mr. Graham Greene, in which the author of *Brighton Rock* and *The Heart of the Matter* refers a little oddly to the world of *Lord Jim* or the *Forsytes* or the *Dreary Old Wives*. I believe that Arnold Bennett would have been more generous in his comments on Mr. Greene's work.

\* \* \*

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Of all the annuals there is none more urbane or better produced than *The Saturday Book* (Hutchinson, 25s.). This year Mr. John Hadfield has succeeded Mr. Leonard Russell as editor. The standard remains constant, the production is charming. There is a special section on the 'Twenties.

\* \* \*

I have never read anything quite like the autobiographical writings of Mr. Cecil Roberts. *One Year of Life* (Hodder & Stoughton, 20s.) left me dizzy. His bouts of illness, his keen eye for detail, his apparently limitless knowledge of picturesque history, his exalted and sometimes his regal friendships, blend into a luscious mélange. I imagine that it will be difficult to procure a copy from the circulating libraries for months and months. No wonder Sir Max Beerbohm wrote to the author, "What fun to be you!"

\* \* \*

How to live in the same world with the American giant is, to use Mr. Gunther Stein's words, one of our greatest problems since the war ended. He advances his ideas in *The World the Dollar Built* (Dobson, 12s. 6d.), and arrives at the conclusion that we must try, through the United Nations, to "put a solid floor under the economic risk of disarmament and peace."

\* \* \*

A generation ago the stories of Dr. L. P. Jacks varied in popularity among undergraduate readers with those of F. W. Bain, though their content was widely different. It is good to find that *Near the Brink: Observations of a Nonagenarian* (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.) reveals Dr.



Jack in as learned and lively form as ever. It is pleasant to know that he still has an old flint-lock pistol out of the window to scare the Devil away on the first stroke of twelve on the last night of the old year. May he continue to do so for many years to come.

\* \* \*

One of the most charming and unconventional of recent volumes of memoirs is Dorothy Wellesley's *Far Have I Travelled* (Barrie, 16s.). This is not the Duchess of Wellington's autobiography, but an original and sometimes lovely book of reminiscences in prose and poetry. W. B. Yeats had a high opinion of this author's work, and some of the poems printed here, especially *Dawn at Ely*, are exquisite things. In the prose passages, the beautiful, supernatural, and the comic are happily and inextricably mingled.

\* \* \*

Hilaire Belloc once called the *English Channel* (Hodder & Stoughton, 25s.) "the most marvellous sea in the world." In their new book Mr. Peter Temple and Mr. Keith Baynes have, respectively, written about and illustrated this little sea and its surrounding coasts with vigour and gaiety. They have talked with mariners and searched out odd corners of little towns. The publishers may be congratulated on a book which delights the eye.

\* \* \*

The story of Baldwin Hamey, a Flemish physician who went to Russia as Court Doctor to Czar Fedor, and afterwards settled for the rest of his life in Elizabethan London, is told in *Hamey the Stranger*



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(Bles, 21s.), by John Keevil. Baldwin's son, also named Baldwin, became the chief benefactor to the Royal College of Physicians. This book is a workmanlike study of an extraordinary man.

\* \* \*

The Princeton University Press (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege) has just issued *More's "Utopia": The Biography of an Idea*, by J. H. Hexter (20s.). This is described as a fresh analysis which traces the idea of the book as it grew in More's mind. Professor Hexter has written a scholarly monograph which may be commended to the notice of students of "Utopia."

E. G.

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From about February, 1935, to May, 1936, Achmed Amba was one of the four chiefs of the Kremlin Guard in personal attendance on Stalin and responsible for his security. The first-hand knowledge thus gained makes *I Was Stalin's Bodyguard* (Muller, 15s.) one of the most informative and important sources so far published about the Soviet dictator. Mr. Amba's close view confirms more distant estimates of Stalin's personal force, his ruthless will, his subtlety of mind, and the unslakeable thirst for universal dominion that make him one of the supreme masters of power of all history. Mr. Amba's own story is also exceptional. A Turk of distinguished family by birth, he went to Russia when he was twenty, won distinction as a physicist, became a Soviet air officer, was imprisoned (and nearly executed) during the Great Purge despite his Kremlin service, fought on the Soviet side during the Second World War, and now lives in Germany, a convinced foe of his former master. An amazing and enthralling tale, even among the fantastic personal Odysseys of our tumultuous time!

\* \* \*

Mr. Louis Fischer's view is too coloured by disappointment and hatred for *The Life and Death of Stalin* (Cape, 16s.) as a whole to penetrate very much below the surface. For the most part familiar facts about Soviet Russia and Stalin's career are, however, supplemented by stories drawn from Mr. Fischer's long journalistic experience and observation in Moscow, and by a few shrewd and enlightening quotations.

\* \* \*

Mr. Hugh Seton-Watson, Professor of Russian History in the University of London, packs an immense amount of little-known information into *The Decline of Imperial Russia, 1855-1914* (Methuen, 32s. 6d.). His period comprises the years between the Crimean War and the First

## Books in Brief

World War ; his treatment covers the structure of State and society, the political movements with which Tsarist Russia seethed, and the fateful story of her ill-managed foreign relations ; one of his main themes is the impact of Western ideas and Western economy upon a backward social and political structure—a topic of obvious importance to-day. Written with scholarship and clarity, Mr. Seton-Watson's survey provides material essential for the understanding of forces which are still shaping the development of Russia and affecting her impact on the outside world.

J. M.

## RECORD REVIEW

By ALEC ROBERTSON

IT is quite evident that 1953 will mark an increase in the number of companies issuing long-playing records, and already Philips, the well-known radio manufacturers, have announced a first "release" in mid-January drawn from a lengthy list of names, which includes a number of well-known artists and orchestras. The Philips' slogan is "The records of the century," another new company adopts "True balance recording": but, in view of these and similarly modest pronouncements, it is incumbent upon prospective purchasers to become as exacting as possible in their demands.

We should, for instance, refuse to accept a work well recorded on one side of an L.P. with one indifferently recorded, or badly chosen, on the reverse.

Now that exclusive contracts no longer operate there will be competitive bidding for artists, and perhaps a temptation to undertake too much work and, in the process of hurrying from one studio to another, to give under-rehearsed or casual performances. It is natural to want to

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Record Review

make hay while the sun shines, but wise to remember that the customer can put the sun out.

Vigilance is needed, also, to guard against the passing of poorly engineered records, careless labelling, inaccurate notes on the record sleeves. The standard, in general, is high, and Decca, the pioneers of L.P. in this country, have shown great enterprise in their choice of repertoire, for which all gramophiles should be grateful. But now that the sheer novelty of L.P. is wearing off the public will become (one hopes) more critical, by which I do not mean querulous or destructive.

*Orchestral*

It is good to have Falla's ballet *El Amor Brujo* (*Love the Magician*), one of his most fascinating scores, recorded complete by the orchestra of the *Conservatoire de Paris*, under a Spanish conductor, Argenta, who sees to it that this Andalusian gipsy piece is not refined or prettified. The recording itself is very clear and the music exerts all of its strange magic: nowhere more so than in the mysterious number *The Magic Circle*, in *The Ritual Fire Dance*, and the beautiful *Pantomime*. Ana-Maria Iriarte, the singer in the work, has a rather hard and down-to-earth sort of voice, such as the style of the music demands (Columbia 33C1004).

Stravinsky's ballet *Le Sacre du Printemps* (about which Siegfried Sassoon wrote one of his best satirical poems) has now become thoroughly respectable and even, in the concert hall, a bit of a bore. In his performance, with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Markevitch treats the music, whenever he can, romantically, and I must say I prefer his view of it to the cold clarity of Ansermet's rendering on Decca LXT2563. The new recording has less volume of tone and is variable but, on the whole, it is impressively good (H.M.V. C.LP1003).

*Chamber Music*

The Pascal String Quartet play the three Rasoumovsky quartets of Beethoven's Op. 59 on Nixa CLP1205-6-7. These are competent and musical performances :

## RECORD REVIEW

but even if they had been nearer to the heart's desire they would have been gravely prejudiced by indifferent, and sometimes ugly-sounding, recording. On the other hand the two Haydn quartets, G major, Op. 76, No. 1 and E flat major, Op. 76, No. 6, played by the Barchet String Quartet, are excellently recorded in addition to being well played. This is a most enjoyable disc (Nixa PLP233).

For constant and unfailing delight and refreshment of spirit I recommend warmly the *Six Sonatas*, Op. 1, by Handel, for violin and harpsichord, played to perfection by Campoli and George Malcolm and, apart from a balance which does not give enough weight to the harpsichord, very well recorded (Decca LXT2751).

Another treasurable disc, this time a "78," is Fauré's lovely little *Pavanne* played by the London Chamber Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by Anthony Bernard, with Gareth Morris as solo flute.

If you do not know this little piece it will be a real find; if you do, it will demand immediate purchase (H.M.V. C4197).

### Opera

A recent Nixa recording of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* suffered from some poor casting and indifferent orchestral playing and other recordings of the opera in the past always fell short of success: and so it is a great pleasure to have the fine performance given at Bernard Miles's Mermaid Theatre worthily transferred on to L.P. There are some changes in the cast. Elizabeth Schwarzkopf sings Belinda, Arda Mandikian the Sorceress and Thomas Hemsley, Aeneas, but we have Flagstad's noble Dido—and she is in splendid voice—and Geraint Jones's sensitive and musicianly direction at the harpsichord (H.M.V. ALP1026).

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